Chronological order of
Gupta DYNASTY

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF THE GUPTA DYNASTY

(Sri) Gupta (c. 270-300) Itsing who travelled through India in the last quarter of the 7th cent, seems refering to the first ruler of the Gupta dynasty, when he states that about 500 years ago a great king Sri-Gupta built a temple for Chinese pilgrims near Mrga-sikha-vana, which was about 300 miles tp the east of Nalanda. This would place Sri Gupta in the vicinity of Murshidabad Distt. of Bengal in about A.D. 175 to 200. On the other hand the Gupta inscriptions begin their genealogy from Maharaja Gupta, who was the grand-father of Candragupta If we take 319 A.D. as the date of Candra Gupta I, the date of his grand-father Maharaja Gupta (called Adiraja in Poona plates of Prabhavati Gupta) would be about 270 A.D. Was, then, Maharaja Gupta identical with Sri Gupta mentioned by I-tsing, or they were different persons ? The slight difference in their names, and the difference of a 100 years in time, has led some scholars to regard them as different persons. Putting Sri Gupta a 100 years before Maharaja Gupta, they have supposed one or two unknown generations more to fill up the gap. But Allan rightly identifies the two rulers. The difference in their names is not a serious difficulty, for Sri of Sri Gupta can be taken as honorific. The objection of time can be answered bythe fact that I-tsing's statement about an event far remote from his time, was based on ancient tradition or hearsay. Moreover, I-tsing mentions the period in round figures, and to say 500 for 450 is not an uncommon experience. We may, therefore, safely conclude that both Sri Gupta and Maharaja Gupta were identical persons, and that the Gupta dynasty began with Maharaja Gupta as the evidence of their records shows.

Ghatotkaca (c. 300-319) About his son, Maharaja Ghatotkaca, we know from the Allahabad Pillar Inscription only that he, like his father, was styled as Maharaja. Some scholars regard Ghatotkaca as the same person as Kaca whose name occurs on gold coins. But those coins bear on the reverse the legend 'sarva-rajoccheta' -- the exterminater of all kings, which certainly Ghatotkaca was not. Moreover, being a mere feudatory king Ghatotkaca was not entitled to issue gold coins. Therefore he cannot be identical with Kaca. No other exclusive record of these early Gupta rulers is found.

Candragupta I (c. 319-350) "Anugangam Prayagam ca Saketam Magadhams tatha,
Etan janapadan sarvan moksyante Gupta-vamsajah."
(c 320-330)-Selat Inscription (Purana).

The Allahabad Pillar Inscription mentions Candragupta after Ghatotkaca. The title of Maharajadhiraja of Candragupta in contrast with the simple title of Maharaja of his forefathers, accounts for the assumption that through his matrimonial alliance with the Licchavis, he rose to the powerful status of an Emperor and started the Gupta era to commemorate his succession to the throne in 319 A.D. About his last date we have no definite evidence. (Gold coins commemorate his marriage with the Licchivi Princess).

Samudragupta (c. 350-374) According to the Allahabad Pillar Inscription,
(c. 330-375) S.I.
Samudragupta succeeded his father Candragupta I. Like his father, he too is styled as Maharajadhiraja. The Nalanda Copper-plate and Gaya Copper-plate dated 5 and 9 Gupta years (A.D. 324 & 328) respectively, which are attributed to Samudragupta, seem to be spurious. Therefore they cannot be reliable for determining the date of Samudragupta. Some scholars have tried to identify Samudragupta with Kaca of gold coins, as these coins have a striking resemblance with those of Samudragupta. But Gupta coins invariably use only one real name of the ruler. Hence Kaca and Samudragupta must be taken as different monarchs. Kaca may have been, as some scholars have suggested, the elder brother of Samudragupta. According to them Kaca, being jealous of his fortunate younger brother Samudragupta, seized the opportunity of capturing the throne when their father Candragupta I died on the other bank of Ganga, and when Samudragupta, who was elected by his father to succeed, was absent from the capital. This supposition may seem to derive some sort of confirmation from internal evidence of the inscription, viz., "tulyakulaja-mlananadviksitah" --- 'looked at with envy with faces, melancholy (through the rejection of themselves) by others of equal birth'--- The gaps after the verse "Aryo hityupaguhya ..." may have contained reference to the fratricidal wars along with the rebellion of other feudatory kings also. But nothing definite can be inferred from these fragments. The difficulty of placing Kaca before Samudragupta remains unsolved, as the epithet of 'sarvarajoccheta' for a ruler just before Samudragupta is unthinkable. It was Samudragupta who, for the first time in the Gupta dynasty, conquered other feudatory kings of Uttara-

patha and Daksinapatha, and could be called 'sarvarajocchota'.

Ramagupta (c. 374-375) Before the discovery of a play "Devi-Candraguptam", by Visakhadatta, Candragupta II was held as the immediate successor of Samudragupta. But through a critical study of this play it was found that Samudragupta was succeeded by his eldest son Ramagupta. According to "Devi-Candraguptam", a contemporary Saka king overwhelmed him and demanded from him his queen Dhruvadevi, in whose guise Candragupta II went to Sakapati and killed him. Afterwards Candragupta II murdered his elder brother Ramagupta and married his widow.

Apart from the literary evidences of Bana (Harsacaritam), Sankararya (Harsacarita-tika), and Abul Hassan Ali (Majma-ut-tarikh) to confirm these events, there are epigraphic records also. In Sanjan Plates of Amoghavarsa I, dated 871 A.D., it is stated "that donor in the Kaliyuga, who was of the Gupta lineage, having killed his brother, we are told, seized his kingdom and wife." This is further proved by the fact that Dhruvadevi, the name of Candragupta II's queen occuring in Gupta records is the same as the name of Ramagupta's widow whom Candragupta is represented in the play to have married. The disgraceful compliance of Ramagupta with the demand of the Sakapati may explain the absence of his name from the Gupta records. The total absence of his coins indicates his very short reign.

Candragupta II (A.D. 375-412) Candragupta II, after killing his brother Ramagupta, ascended the throne in 375 A.D., for his first date is known from Mathura inscription, dated 380 as his 5th regnal year. And his last date is known from Sanchi Stone Pillar Inscription dated in Gupta year 93 (412 A.D.).

Govindagupta (413-414 A.D.) Next to this date on the Gupta records is A.D. 415 which is given to Kumaragupta I. Between the last known date of Candragupta II (412 A.D.) and the earliest found date of Kumaragupta I (415 A.D.), there is an interval of three years. It is quite possible (? probable) that either Candragupta II ruled up to A.D. 414, or Kumaragupta started his rule from A.D. 415. But a newly discovered Seal of Dhruvasvamini at Basarh has brought to light another son of Candragupta II, named Maharaja Govindagupta, the son of Dhruvasvamini, the queen of Candragupta II.

omission of the name of Skandagupta's mother shows that neither she was Mahadevi, nor he himself was the rightful heir to the throne.

But we must remember that neither the mention of the mothers of the Gupta rulers, even when they were apparently Mahadevis, was essential, nor necessarily the eldest son alone was held as a rightful heir. Again, the reference in the Junagarh Rock Insc. is not to a fratricidal conflict, but to a war with barbarians (Hunas & Pusyamitras). Equally untenable is the effort of Majumder in identifying Skandagupta with Purugupta, as we do not hear of two different names of the same sovereign on the Gupta coins. And the suggestion to meet this controversy by saying that Skandagupta and Purugupta were ruling contemporarily after dividing the Gupta Empire, is absolutely impossible and fantastic. The coins and records of Skandagupta, Purugupta and his successors are found practically in all parts of the country and at the same places. Therefore, the division of the Empire between them cannot hold good. Finally, the mention of Purugupta in Bhitari Seal immediately after Kumaragupta I with the prefix 'tat-padanudhyata' does not necessarily prove that Purugupta was the immediate successor of the latter. On the other hand, there are two more convincing anf forceful proofs for placing Skandagupta immediately after Kumaragupta I. First is the more extensive territory covering the findspots of the coins of Skandagupta, in contrast with the smaller region of the findspots of the coins of Purugupta, N.-gupta and Kumaragupta II. The territory of Skandagupta corresponds to that just held by his father Kumaragupta I and the territory of the later rulers indicates a subsequent disintegration of the Empire. Secondly, the last known date of Kumaragupta I is G.S. 136, and also the first date of the Skandagupta is the same, which is found on Junagarh Rock Insc.

Skandagupta (A.D. 455-467) After the death of Kumaragupta I in 455, Skandagupta ascebded the throne in the same year. This date is met with on the famous Jun. Rock Insc. As a result of comparatively long reign of his father and grand-father, 40 and 36 years respectively, Skandagupta ruled for a short period of 12 years only. No coin bearing the name of Skandagupta is found after the year 148 G.S. i.e. A.D. 467.

Purugupta (A.D. 467-475) After [illegible]

Purugupta (A.D. 467-473) After Skandagupta, his brother Purugupta came to the throne. The omission of the name of Skandagupta, from the Bhitari Seal of Kumaragupta III may be accounted for by the hostile relations between the brothers or be attributed to the usual practice of omitting the names of collateral kings. The paucity of his coins indicates his short period of reign, and very presumably he died in 473 A.D.

From the reign of Purugupta onward, we are confronted with a period of total confusion which presents difficulties in making out a chronological order.

After Purugupta, Gupta lineage Bhitari Seal of Kumaragaupta III gives a genealogical order of Purugupta, Narasimhagupta and Kumaragupta, and further, the Nalanda clay Seal gives Vismugupta as Kumaragupta's son. These inscriptions give no date at all. The data of the Seals when put together gives the order of succession in the following way :- namely, after Purugupta his son Narasimhagupta, after him his son Kumaragupta, and after him his son Vismugupta. On the other hand, we get from a Nalanda Seal another son of Purugupta, namely, Budhagupta whose date is known from another insc. from Sarnath as 476 A.D., i.e. 9 years after the last known date of Skandagupta. Now, it has to be seen as to which Purugupta's two sons, Narasimhagupta and Budhagupta, came to the throne first. If Narasimhagupta preceded Budhagupta, then NG must have been followed by his son Kumaragupta, and by his grand-son Vismugupta, because there is no reason to interrupt this available genealogical lineThis course, if admitted, would allow only 9 years for 4 generations of which Purugupta, Narasimhagupta, Kumaragupta and Vismugupta., which is highly impossible for 4 generations not only to come on the throne, but for the latter two generations even to come into existence. It may, therefore, be granted that Budhagupta preceded Narasimhagupta and his successors Kumaragupta and Vismugupta.

Now, the mention of Kumaragupta in Sarnath insc. dated A.D. 473 is to be reconciled. This mention of the date certainly places him before Budhagupta (476). How can, then, he be identified with Kumaragupta of Bhitari Seal, whose presence before Budhagupta has been proved above as impossible ? Consequently, both of them must be different persons, Kumaragupta of Sarnath may be taken as KG II and that of Bhitari Seal as KG III.

Now we can say that Kumaragupta of Sarnath inscription (i.e. KG II) succeeded Purugupta in 473, and he in his turn was succeeded by his brother Budhagupta in 476 A.D. (the date known from his Sarnath insc.) The last date of Budhagupta is 494 A.D., known from his silver coins. Then follows the reign of another son of Purugupta, viz., Narasimhagupta. After him comes his son Kumaragupta III (known from Bhitari Seal) and then his grandson Vismugupta (known from Nalanda Seal). For these three rulers we have no dates in our present records.

Vainya
Vismugupta
A.D. 507

Then, in point of time comes Vainyagupta. The Gunaighar Copper-plate dated 188 + 319 = 507 A.D. styles him simply Maharaja, which led some scholars to think him as a local ruler. The revised reading of the gold coins, which has been corrected as Vainyagupta for Candragupta, has now indicated his imperial status, because the privilege of issuing gold coins belonged only to imperial rulers. Moreover, a fragment of clay sealing from Nalanda, which records him as Maharajadhiraja, has further confirmed this point.

Bhanugupta
A.D. 510

From Eran Pillar Insc. dated A.D. 510, we get the name of Bhanugupta. There he is described as "jagati pravirah" and "Partha-sama-vikramah raja". The Gupta-ending of his name connects him with the Gupta Royal Family. But the absence of an imperial title in that inscription and the non-existence of any other record in other parts of the country may make him a local Viceroy. Or if he is to be regarded as a sovereign ruler, then the division of the Gupta Empire may be presumed. Or thirdly, Bhanugupta might have been a younger brother of Vainyagupta, whom he succeeded on the throne after his death.

2. Vyaghraraja of Mahakantara, which was in the neighbourhood of Kosala, may be located on the upper coast of Mahanadi, extending from Bastar and Jaipur State in Orissa.

3. Mantaraja of Korala (read Kerala), identified with Sonapur Dist. in C.P.

4. Mahendragiri of Pistapura, modern Pittapuram of Madras Presid. in the east Godavari District.

5. Svamidatta of Kauttura, a village in modern Ganjam District.

6. Damana of Erandapalla. Fleet identifies it with Erandole in Khandesh Dist., but a copper-plate from Diddhantam says Erandapalla to be situated in a village near Chikapali.

7. Vismugopa of Kanci, modern Kanjivaram, 60 miles away from Madras, previously the Capital of the Pallavas.

8. Nilaraja of Avamukta, mentioned in Hathigumpha cave insc. (2nd cent. B.C.), to be located in Nellor District of the Pallavas.

9. Hastivarman of Vengi, situated in the heart of Andhra, to be located in Piddavegi in Krishna Diatrict.

10. Ugrasena of Palakka. Smith says Palaghata (Coimbatore Distt.), more reasonably located in Palakada of Nellore Distt., mentioned in inscs. of Pallavas.

11. Kubera of Devarastra : In Kasimkota plates of king Gangavarman, mention of Devarastra ; presented in many plates lying in Kalinga ; to be identified with Yellamanchilitalu of Vizagapattam Distt. on E.coast of Deccan.

12. Dhananjaya of Kusthalapura, modern Kuttalur in Madras Presidency.

Samudragupta followed the policy of 'grahana-moksa' with the rulers of Daksinapatha, captured and released them, and made them feudatories.

SECOND CAMPAIGN IN ARYAVARTA : It seems Nagasena, Acyuta and Kotakulaja allied themseves with the adjoining rulers and instigated them to rebel against SG. SG now changed his policy of 'grahana-moksa' and exterminated them vigorously and violently (prasabhoddhrta). He annexed their territories to his Empire, since there is no mention of their States. They were the nine forest rulers who rebelled :-

A. Atavika-raja :

1. Rudradeva : by some identified with Rudrasena I Vakataka, but Rudradeva of A.P.I. was a ruler of Aryavarta, while Berar Vakatakas are of Daksinapatha. Final identification undecided.

2. Matila : He may be Mattila of a seal found in Bulandshahr in U.P.

3. Candravarman : May be the king of Susunia inscription in Bengal.

4. Ganapatinaga : A Naga king of Mathura.

5. Nagasena : Of Naga family of Padmavati. Coins found at Padama Pawaya, Gwalior State (ancient Padmavati, centre of Naga family).

6. Acyuta : Coins found in ancient Ahicchattra, modern Ramnagar, Bareilly Dtatrict.

7. Nandi, 8. Balavarma, 9. Nagadatta : No record, no information, no identification.

Then Samudragupta turned towards the tribal and Frontier States.

B. Five Frontier States (Pratyanta-nrpati) :

1. Samatata : Portion of Bengal, Districts of Faridpur, Barisar, and Noakhali ; level land (sama-tata) of south Bengal.

2. Davaka : Some identify it with Dacca (on sound resemblance) ; but to be located in Kapelli valley in Nowgong Diat. of Assam. There is still a place called Daboka.

3. Kamarupa : Upper Assam. One of the Dist. of Assam is still called Kamarupa.

4. Nepala : Modern Nepal.

5. Kartrpura : Some say modern Kartarpur near Jullundur, but it was founded by 5th Sikh Guru Arjun Dev in 1598 A.D. It may be Katarmal in Garhwal, Kumaun, or Katiyar may be Kartrpura. Bhandarkar --- Karttikeyapura or Karttikeyanagara in Almora Dist., but these are distinct. Kartrpura is another Himalayan State, the territory of Katuriya kingdom of Kumaun, Garhwal.

C. Nine Tribal States :

1. Malava : Known from pretty early times, identified with Malloi of Alexander's time, occupying Montgomery & Jhang ; migrated to Ludhiana & Ferozepur, the region called Malwa ; then reached Central India, established their republic there, coins bearing 'Malavanam jaya' found at Ujjayini, Avanti, Bhilsa. They were a brave fighting race ; in SG's time they were probably in Mewar and adjoining regions of South-east Rajputana.

2 Arjunayanas : Mentioned by Panini (4th Cent. B.C.). Alarge number of coins found from Delhi, Agra, Mathura & Jaipur, most probably in SG's time they were here, between Bharatpur & E. Rajputana, somewhere near Jaipur.

3. Yaudheyas : Panini mentions them in Ayudha-jivi Sanghas. They were the glory of ancient India. Some coins bearing 'Jaya Yaudheyanam' found from vill. Sunets, near Ludhiana. A Yaudheya mint found at Khokharkota, village of Rohtak. Coins found from Ludhiana, Ambala, Shahabad, and Hissar, and Inscriptions from Vijayagarh. In the Rudradaman insc. represented as having warrior-like

nature. On their coins the legend 'jaya mantra-dharanam'. Their territory seems to be from Sutlej to Bharatpur and S. part of Bahawalpur State.

4. Madra : Modern district of Gujranwala, Sialkot, Sheikhupura and parts of Jammu ; their Capital Sakala-desa i.e. Sialkot, between Ravi and Chenab.

5. Abhira : In the neighbourhood of the region of Nasik in the west, known to Patanjali (200 B.C.) or nabe in C.I., a place Ahirawata between Bhilsa and Jhansi.

6. Prarjuna : Mentioned in Kautilya's Arthasastra, but no evidence to locate them ; may be located to the north of Bhilsa, if it is mentioned in the record in geographical order.

7. Sanakanika : In the neighbourhood of Bhilsa, Central India.

8. Kaka : Kanakhera, Kakas were chiefs of Kanchi or Kapapura, a village near Bhilsa.

9. Kharaparika : May be located in Damoha Dist. in C.P. in the neighbourhood of Mandagor Dist.

Those tribal and Frontier States paid due homage and tax to SG.

FOREIGN STATES :

Some independent and semi-independent States like Daivaputra-sahi... etc.

1. Daivaputra-sahi-sahanusahi : taken as one title, appears to refer to a Kusana Emperor.

2. Saka-Murunda : Murunda in Saka language means lord. Hence Saka-lord. Sakas in western India (Bombay Presid., Ujjayini).

3. Simhala : Ceylon.

4. Sarva-dvipa-vasibhih : May denote the islands of Indian Ocean, Bali, Java, Sumatra, etc. This influence laid the foundations of Greater India. Their relations with SG were such that they were ready to acknowledge his suzereinty by rendering to him all kinds of services. They paid different kinds of homage, e.g., (i) atma-nivedana, (ii) kanyopayana-dana, (iii) Garutmadanka, sva-visaya-bhukti, sasana-yacana.
(i. Offering their own persons for service to the Emperor, ii. Presents of maidens --- most probably in marriage ---, and gifts, iii. Applications for Charters bearing the Imperial Gupta Garuda seal by which they would be left undisturbed by the Emperor in the enjoyment of their respective territories).

<u>NOTE</u> : 'Daivaputra-sahi-sahanusahi' were the three combined titles, first used by the great Kusana Emperors. 'Daivaputra', derived from Deva-putra. Some consider it to be of Chinese origin. All the Kusana rulers like Kaniska, Huviska and Vasudeva I, use them in their insc-

They were the Indian kings of foreign descent. The word 'Sahi' is of Persian origin, meaning 'royal', borrowed by Greeks, from Greeks by Sakas. Used by Kaniska I and Kusans chiefs of Mianwali, Rawalpindi, Attock and Kabul valley. 'Sahanusahi' is also from Persian Shahanushah. Were Persian monarchs of Sahasani dynasty.

Saka-murunda, the lord of Sakas, of western India with their Capital at Ujjayini.

Simhala : Modern Ceylon. SG's relation with Ceylon is supported by literary evidence. The Chinese author relates that Meghavarna, king of Ceylon, sent to SG, an embassy and gifts coupled with a request that he might be permitted to build at Bodh Gaya, a monastry for the use of Ceylonese pilgrims.

EXTENT OF EMPIRE : SG extended his kingdom over the whole of northern India, from E. Bengal up to the central Panjab in the west, included Bihar, Orissa, U.P., Madras Presid. as far as Kanchi, greater part of Central India and Rajputana. (Up to Narmada in S.)

ADMINISTRATION : 1. North (Aryavarta), 9 forest rulers were exterminated, their territories were annexed and were directly ruled by Samudragupta.

2. South (Dakshinapatha): 12 rulers were defeated, captured and liberated and were made feudatories.

3. In east and west, 5 Frontier chiefs and 9 tribal States were made tributaries who paid taxes, obeyed orders, and performed obeisance in person.

4. Independent and semi-independent States recognized his authority and sought his favour by 'atma-nivedana, etc.'

SG did not crush the autonomy of some rulers, except of those of the north owing to their rebellious behaviour. But he centralized the administration of all provinces. In Frontier and Tribal areas, non-interference was a wise step, otherwise he would not have succeeded. The English also did so. Thus he made strong defensive line without much difficulty and labour. His was a modern type of administration. He had a great sense of diplomacy and statesmanship.

PERSONAL QUALITIES : 1. Diplomatic Statesmanship, 2. Martial spirit, 3. Impressive personality, 4. Robust health, (from coins), 5. Scholar

of varied accomplishments, 6. Patron of learning and of learned men, 7. Taste for music and fine arts, 8. Catholic nature. Allowed Megha- to build a Buddhist monastry in his territory, 9. Liberal donor, 10. Guardian of the poor and orphans, 11. Girotsannasvamedhartta (on coins), reviver of long neglected horse-sacrifice, or performer of the long-drawn horse-sacrifice, 12. In order to conform to the Hindu ideal of Imperialism, he made 'Dig-vijaya' in the north, and 'Dharma-vijaya' in the south, 13. Fit to be called Vikramaditya.

DATE : Accession ; (a) If Nalanda Cp.-pl. is a genuine record, and he is the founder of the Gupta Era, then he might have ascended the throne in 300 A.D. (circa), (b) But if the founder of GE is CG I and Nalanda Cop.-pl. is spurious, then CG I married shortly after his accession in A.D. 320 and SG must have ascended the throne in c. 350 A.D.

Last Date : A.D. 375 as the earliest date of his son CG II is 380 as his 5th regnal year.

INSCRIPTIONS : 1. Nalanda Copper-plate (spurious) GE 5.

2. Gaya Copper-plate (spurious) GE 9.

3. Allahabad Pillar Inscription.

4. Eran Stone Inscription.

Of them Nos. 1, 2 are certainly spurious, because (a) characters belong to 6th-7th cent., (b) indiscriminate use of 'va' and 'ba' which is not an early characteristic, (c) Asvamedha referred to in it could hardly have been celebrated before the 5th year of SG's reign, (d) SG never styled himself as 'Parama-Bhagavata', which, however, was the title of his successors. (e) the synthetical construction of the Gaya Cp.-pl. shows that the genealogy was copied from earlier records.

No. 3 has "...vyapta-nikhilavani-tala kirttin itas tridasapati-bhavana-gamanavapta-lalita-sukha-vicaranam acaksana iva ..."

Fleet believed that this line refers to Samudragupta as dead. But this record is not posthumous, because (a) this line actually refers to the king's fame as reaching heaven after pervading the whole earth. (b) No mention is made of the Asvamedha sacrifice. Therefore it may have been issued before its performance.

No. 4 gives his wife's name as Datta.

K A C A

IDENTIFICATION : Kaca is known from gold coins bearing his name. He can neither be identified with : (1) Ghatotkaca, the grandfather of Samudragupta, because he ruled over a small territory and did not conquer any kingdom, but the coins bear the title 'sarva-rajocchetta'. Moreover, only the Imperial rulers have struck their gold coins, while Ghatotkaca possessed a small territory : nor with (2) Samudragupta because a secondary name was not put on the official documents and coins.

(3) Most probably he was the elder brother of Samudragupta, who might have headed a rebellion against SG and captured the throne when SG was away to see his father CG I on the other bank of Ganga where CG died. The inferior quality of his coins shows his hasty intrusion on to the throne. The epithet 'sarva-rajocchetta' is an empty boast of a pretender.

CANDRAGUPTA II

SUCCESSION : He was the son of Samudragupta from his chief queen Dattadevi. The Gupta inscriptions tell us of his relation with SG, but give no specific information about his immediate succession to the throne after Samudragupta.

RAMAGUPTA : CG may have been intervened by his elder brother Ramagupta, whose name is also known from literary sources : (1) Devi-Candraguptam, a drama by Visakhadatta. Ramagupta was besieged by a Saka ruler who compelled him to surrender his beautiful queen Dhruvadevi to him. RG agreed. But CG, disguised as Dhruvadevi, killed the Saka ruler, and then killed RG, married Dhruvadevi. (2) Harsacaritam of Bana states "Para-kalatra-komukam kamini-vesa-guptaas Candraguptah Saka-patim agatayat". (3) Sankararya in his commentary on Harsacaritam gives details of the incident as found in Devi-Candraguptam. (4) Majma-ut-tawarikh describes the event like Devi-Candraguptam. (5) Rajasekhara (9th-10th cent) states the event but the name differs. He says it was Sarmagupta, which may have been a writer's mistake or the misreading of a copyist who confused the letters 'Ra' with 'Sar'.

Inscriptional evidence : (6) Sanjan plates of Amoghavarsa (871 A.D. state that a donor of Kaliyuga, who belonged to Gupta lineage, having killed his brother, seized his kingdom and married his widow. (7) Rastrakuta Cop.pl. Grant of Govinda IV corroborates the literary evidence. Comparison drawn between Govinda IV and Sahasanka (i.e. CG II of Rajasekhara).

REFUTATION : It seems incredible that a scion of the mighty Guptas and son of SG, could have been reduced to such a helpless condition that he became ready to offer his queen like a coward. The occurence of Ramagupta' name in the inscriptions can be defended by saying that the inscs. give genealogical lists and not dynastic lists. Absence of his coins may be due to his short reign and the Saka invasion at the very outset. But there is no definite and positive evidence to regard him as a Gupta Emperor. It is merely based on probabilities.

INSCRIPTIONS OF CG II : (1) Mathura Pillar Insc., Regnal year 5, GE 61 (A.D. 380).
(2) Udayagiri Cave Insc., GE 82 (A.D.401).
(3) Gadhwa Insc., GE 88 (A.D. 407).
(4) Sanchi Stone Insc. , GE 93 (A.D.412).

(5) Silver coins, GE 93 + X

(6) Mehrauli Iron Pillar Inscription.

(7) Basarh Clay Seals of Govindagupta (his son) and Dhruvasvamini (his queen).

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IDENTIFICATION OF CANDRA OF MEHRAULI IRON PILLAR INSCRIPTION, DELHI

The inscription credits the king Candra with the following achievements :-

(1) Conquest of Vanga country by battling a confederacy of foes.

(2) Conquest of Vahlikas after crossing the 7 'mukhas' of Indus.

(3) Spread of his fame, as a consequence, up to the southern sea.

(4) Achievement of undisputed sole sovereignty by the prowess of his own arms.

1. CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA ? : It has been suggested that Candra of M.I.P.I. is Candragupta Maurya, because he also defea-ted Bahlikas and advanced as far as the ocean. But this much is not sufficient for the identification. Palaeographic evidence is against this identification, because the characters of the insc. belong to the 4th or 5th century A.D.

2. CHANDRAGUPTA I ? : Others identify him with Candragupta I, the creator of the Gupta empire, who must have been a man of such achievements. But (i) according to Purana, his dominion was restricted up to Saketa, Prayaga and Magadha : "Anugangam Prayagam ca Saketam Magadhams tatha - Etan jana-padan sarvan bhoksyante Gupta-vamsajah". (ii) CG I, therefore, did not come into clash with Bahlikas. (iii) CG I did not conquer Bengal, which otherwise would have been mentioned in the Allahabad Pillar Insc. On the other hand, SG is credited with the conquest of Bengal (Samatata, Davaka, Etc.) in the east, and Madras and Yaudheyas in the west.

3. SADACANDRA BHARASIVA OF NAGA FAMILY ? : This identification, too, is not possible, because (a) Sadacandra must have been ruling in East Malava in the times of Samudragupta or his father CG I. He could not reach Bengal without crossing Magadha. (b) Puranas make no mention of these exploits of Sadacandra. (c) Samudragupta, on the other hand, overthrew the Nagas in his northern campaign. How could the Nagas have acquired sole sovereignty ?

4. CHANDRAVARMAN OF PUSKARANA : Haraprasada Sastri identified him with Candravarman, the ruler of Puskarana, son of Simhavarman, known from Sisunia Rock Insc. in Bengal. He took Puskarana to be a place of the same name in Jodhpur State, and identified Simhavarman with Simhavarman, father of Naravarman, mentioned in the Mandasor Insc (A.D. 404) of Naravarman. The plausibility of the identity was based on the similarity of names and the fact that both the Mehrauli and Sisunia inscs. are Vaisnava records, bearing Visnu-cakra. But this identity has been set at naught by (i) the fact that Sisun. Insc. says nothing about any conquest made by Candravarman, and Mandasor Insc. makes Simhavarman a local ruler; (ii) A place called Pokharan (ancient Puskarana) has been discovered at Bankura, which is nearer to Sisunia Rock than Jodhpur. (iii) The insc. of Naravarman does not mention the name of Candravarman, who should have been his brother. (iv) How could Candravarman of Jodhpur reach Bengal without defeating the Guptas ? (v) The Varman records of Mandasor make no reference to the achievements of the brother of Naravarman, whose name was Candravarman. (vi) The geographical position of Puskarana (Rajputana) and Sisunia Rock and Visnupada render the identification untenable.

5. CANDRAGUPTA II : He has been identified with Candragupta II, because :

(i) The expressions both on the coins of Candragupta II and on Meh. Iron P. Pnsc. have striking resemblances, both having the abbreviated name Candra and making him a great Vaisnava. (ii) Palaeography is similar to the All. Pill. Insc., i.e., Brahmi of northern class of 5th cent. Though in many respects approximate to All. P. I., yet with marked 'matras' and horizontal top strokes, letters resembling most closely to Bilsad Insc. of KG I. Hence 5th. cent. A.D. (iii) CG II overthrew the Sakas. He is, therefore, rightly called the creator of the Empire. His recently discovered Mathura Insc. shows that he was the first Gupta king who occupied Mathura, the last outpost and stronghold of Kusana power. (iv) A specific victory over Bahlika would have been necessary if CG II had wanted to finish the Kusana rule in India, and for this it was indeed necessary to wage a war over the whole of Saptasindhu. (v) At the time of the accession of CG II there were court intrigues at the Capital (Ramagupta episode), which shook the Empire.

His attention being diverted to the NW Kusanas, there was confusion in the Empire, in which the 'Pratyanta-nrpatayah' in Bengal combined together and rebelled. CG II had therefore to quell the rebellion and conquered Bengal with the force of his arms. (vi) CG II's political influence in southern countries, suggested in the M.I.P.I., is a well established fact, as he made matrimonial alliances with the Vakatakas.

IS THE MEHRAULI INSCRIPTION POSTHUMOUS ?

From the following references in the MIPI with regard to Candra, it can be inferred that CG II died when this record was set up.

"Khinnasyeva visṛjya gām narapater gām āgritasyetarām,
Mūrtyā karma-jitāvanim gatavatah kīrtyā sthitasya ksitau."

But the omission of any reference in MIPI to any conquest over the Śakas in Surāṣṭra leaves it doubtful whether the record was posthumous. He may have defeated the Śakas after the record was incised. If the record was really posthumous, the objection about the omission of his victory over the Śakas stands.

CONDITIONS : Although SG made the far off Frontier States of the Śakas and Kuṣāṇas recognise his authority, yet they were looking out for a chance of becoming free. After the death of SG, the Frontier kingdoms in the NW, W, and E, seem to have begun to make violations, which CG II was able to suppress successfully.

ACHIEVEMENTS : (1) The first verse implies that he overthrew a confederacy of Frontier kings in Bengal, who might have risen against him during the court intrigues at the Capital. Lion-slayer type of coins corroborate this. (2) He conquered Bahlikas after crossing the seven mouths (tributaries) of Sindhu, i.e., crossing the region of Saptasindhu. 'mukha' is technically the name of the junction of a river and the sea, Cf. 'Nadi-mukhena samudram avisat' (Kalidasa). Or 'mukha' may be taken as tributary. Hence 'sapta-mukhani', the tributaries of Indus, implies the route taken by CG II to fight the Bahlikas, the name of Balakh, N. part of Afghanistan, called Bakhtar in modern Persian, and Bactria in Greek. In Mahabharata :"Pancanam Sindhu-sasthanam antaralesu ye sthitah
Bahika nama te desa na tatra divasam vaset."

Therefore, it follows that people of the Panjab were meant, who lived between Sutlej and Indus. It may imply that people from Bactria had come down and settled in the Panjab. These were Kusanas, whom CG II

exterminated. Mathura inscription corroborates it.

(3) He, then, started his campaign towards the SW parts :

(i) "Kṛtsna-pṛthivī-jayārthena rajñaiveha sahāgatah" (Udayagiri Rock Cave Insc. Of CG II) undated. This shows that CG II with his Minister for Peace and War, Virasena (also called Śaba), went to Udayagiri (in Mālava) to conquer the whole earth. (ii) Another insc. from the same place is dated A.D. 401, which implies that this part of the country (i.e. Mālava and Ujjayinī) was conquered some time before 401. It was already occupied by the Śakas. On this score he was called Śakāri (iii) The numismatic evidence also corroborates the above view. The Ksatrapas were subdued by Samudragupta, and their coins became extinct (from 305-348 A.D.). But Sakas regained their power under Rudrasena II, whose coins re-appear from 348 to 378, bearing the title 'Mahaksatrapa' implying revival of their power under Rudrasena II, Rudrasena III and his successor Mahaksatrapa Svami Mahasena (c. 382, 384 A.D.). Then again their coins come to an end from 388 A.D. and are replaced by the Kusana type of coins of CG II with the legend 'Candra', dated GE 90 (A.D. 409). CG II must have struck the coins after he had established his full authority over the Saka territory firmly. Most probably the Ksatrapa king whom CG II defeated was Simhasena Mahaksatrapa. He attacked the Saka territory probably in 388 A.D. as their coins came to an end at that date.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS VICTORY OVER SAKAS IN SW :

(i) He achieved political success by driving away the foreign domination and extending his Empire.

(ii) Commercial and financial gains through trade from the ports of Gujerat and Kathiawad with Europe.

(iii) Through trade Indians came in contact with western civilisation.

(iv) To Roamn markets India exported silken articles, cotton thread, spices, precious stones, beautiful birds, etc., which brought a large quantity of gold into India.

(v) In his Natural History, Pliny complains of the luxuries of Romans which drained gold to India.

EXTENT : He conquered the whole of Malava province, Western Saka Ksatrapas, NW Kusanas and Bengal frontiers. His Empire extended from Bengal

in the east, right up to Indus in the NW, and from Himalayas in the north up to S. India up to Kanci on the eastern coast and Surastra on the western coast. It included fertile provinces and important parts of Cambay, Ghogha, Verwal, Porebandar, Dwarka and Malava. He was justified in speaking of himself as "Praptena sva-bhujarjitam ca suciram caikadhirajyam ksitau", i.e., the sole sovereignty of the earth by the prowess of his own arms.

MATRIMONIAL ALLIANCES : (1) He himself married Kuberanaga, of Naga family. (2) He got his own daughter Prabhavati-gupta married to Rudrasena II of Vakataka family. These alliances were made purely with a political motive. The great Vakatakas could be of much service to him as allies and terror to him as foes, owing to their geographical situation while dealing with the Ksatrapas. He got much help from them in subduing the Ksatrapas.

FRONTIERS : (1) Maharaja Trikamala, known from Bodhisattve Image Insc. at Gaya, GE 64. (2) Svanidasa, ruler of Valkha (prob. C.I.) known from a land grant of GE 67. (3) Maharaja Sri Visvamitra Svami, known from a seal found at Besanagara.

COINS : 1. Gold coins, 2. Silver coins, 3. Copper coins, 4. Dinara, 5, Suvarnas, 6. Kauris. (Material)

Types : 1. Archer type indicating martial spirit. 2. Couch type showing artistic temperament. 3. Bowman type indicating bravery, 4. Chatra type revealing sole sovereignty, 5. Lion-slayer type representing his authority over Bengal, 6. Horseman type, etc., showing sportsmanship and other personal habits.

Legends : 1. Simhavikama, 2. Narendra-candra, 3. Rupakrti, 4. Vikramaditya, 5. Vikramānka, 6. Parama-bhāgavata.

ADMINISTRATION : Ministers :- 1. Maharaja Sanakānīka from Udayagiri Cave Insc. GE 82, must be the Governor of E. Malava.

2. Amrakardava mentioned in Sanci Stone Insc., GE 93.

3. Śaba Virasena, from Pāṭaliputra, minister of Peace & War, known from Udayagiri Cave Inscription.

4. Sikharasvamin, Mantrin (Counsellor), known from Karmadanda St. Linga Inscription.

5. Maharaja Sri Govindagupta s/o CG II, Governor of Tribhukti

province, with Head Quarters at Vaisali, known from his seal.

6. Dhruvasvamini, Seal found at Vaisali.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES : Known from Seals found at Basarh (Vaisali) issued by Prince Govindagupta.

1. Kumaramatyadhikarana, office of the Prince's ministers.
2. Baladhikarana, office of the Head of the Army.
3. Ranabhandagaradhikarana, the military Exchequer.
4. Dandapasadhikarana, office of the Chief of the Police.
5. Vaisali-adhisthanadhikarana, office of the District Officer of Vaisali.
6. Parisad, Municipality. Udanakupa city was ruled by Parisad. It means up to that time the tradition of Parisad remained intact.
7. Arya-sangha } Governed Kakanadabota Mahavihara (monastery).
8. Panca-mandali } The Sangha operated as a Bank. 25 Dinaras were kept in the Bank for feeding 5 Bhiksus and burning a lamp. "Panca bhiksavo bhunjantam, ratna-grhe ca dipako jvalatu" (Sanci Stone Inscription, GE 93).

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS : 1. Yuvaraja, incharge of the administration.

2. Kumaramatya, performed different functions, attached to Yuvaraja as personal assistant, and incharge of the judicial departments.
3. Yuvaraja Kumaramatya Bhattaraka, Chief of Princes' ministers.
4. Vinaya-sura, Chief Censor.
5. Maha-pratihara, Chief Chamberlain.
6. Maha-Dandanayaka, Chief Justice, or Chief of the Forces.
7. Vinaya-sthiti-sthapaka, Minister of Law and Order.
8. Bhatasvapati, Head of the Infantry and Cavalry.
9. Uparika, Governor of a Province.

On the seals of Kumaramatyas
10. Sri Parama-Bhattaraka-padiya, Chief Minister in waiting on king.
11. Yuvaraja-padiya, Chief Minister in waiting on the Crown Prince.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS : 1. Desa, province, e.g., Sukuli desa.

2. Bhukti, province, e.g. Tira Bhukti.
3. Pradesa, Division, e.g. Airikina Pradesa.
4. Visaya, District, e.g.

GUILDS : Called Nigamas, of different classes of economic interest, e.g., Sresthis (Bankers), Sarthavahas (Traders), Kulikas (Merchants). These guilds functioned like Chambers of Commerce of modern days.

Many seals issued jointly, e.g., Sresthi-sarthavaha-kulika-nigama, and Sresthi-kulika-nigama.

RELIGIONS : 1. Vaisnavism, title 'Parama-bhagavata', MIPI & Uday. Cav. Ins.

2. Saivism, Udayagiri Cave and Mathura Inscriptions.

3. Buddhism, Sanci Inscription.

MINISTERS OF VARIOUS SECTS : 1. Amrakaraddava, a Bauddha.

2. Saba Virasena, Sikhorasvamin : Saiva. Government supported every sect for the uplift of the society is clear from the inscriptions.

FAMILY : 1. Two wives : 1. Dhruvadevi, the Chief Queen, and 2. Kuberanaga.

ii. His sons : 1. Kumaragupta, 2. Govindagupta, and perhaps 3. Ghatotkacagupta born of Dhruvadevi.

iii. Daughters : Prabhavatigupta born of Kuberanaga.

FA-HIEN'S ACCOUNT : Fa-Hien travelled over India from 405 to 411 A.D. He says : people of Northern India led a quite happy life ; no need of Magistrates to settle disputes ; though judicial departments were set up to the standard. Workers got good wages, and amenities of life to their liking and satisfaction. Officers and workers were honest and efficient ; religious-minded ; generally Jainas and Buddhists ; Donors for earning religious merit. Land-lords were not oppressive ; commodities were cheap. Reference only to copper coins and kauris.

DATES : 1. Ascended the throne in A.D. 375 ; known from Mathura insc. dated GE 61 and Regnal Year 5 (A.D. 380). 61 + 319 - 5 = 375

2. Attacked Sakas in A.D. 388, as indicated by (a) the absence of Saka coins from this year onwards, and (b) the appearance of coins of similar type (i.e. Kusana type) of CG II in A.D. 409, which he issued establishing himself firmly.

3. Last date is GE 93 (A.D. 412-413), known from Sanci Stone Insc., GE 93. He could not have ruled much longer, and his son was on the throne in GE 96 (A.D. 415-416) as known from Bilsad St. Pillar Insc., GE 96.

GOVINDAGUPTA

SOURCE : Basarh Clay Seal of Dhruvasvamini, the Chief Queen of CG II, reads as follows :

1. Maharajadhiraja Sri Candragupta-
2. patni Maharaja Sri Govindagupta-
3. mata Mahadevi Sri Dhru-
4. va svamini

This seal brought GG to light for the first time and revealed that he was also the son of CG II.

There are three possibilities with regard to the association of the name of Govindagupta with Dhruvasvamini in the seal, viz., (a) that he was the eldest son and heir-apparent, (b) though younger, he was her favourite, or (c) that he was identical with Kumaragupta.

But, he could not be identical with KG, because alternative names never occur on the official documents and seals. Bhandarkar suggests identity on the score of the letter 'go' on the coins of KG., but (i) these coins of KG are 'suvarna' weight, i.e., 148 grains, the type issued by Sk.G. for the first time. Before him (Sk.G.) up to KG I, coins were of Dinara type, i.e., 124 grains. So, these coins are of later KG. (ii) The letter 'go' occurs also on the coins of Narasimhagupta Baladitya Hence the argument is not decisive.

As to (b) above, favouritism is a domestic affair and cannot be represented in purely official records. This seal is official, as it is found at Vaisali, a Provincial Capital, along with seals of other officers.

As to (a) above, seals of Yuvaraja also found from the same room. It indicates that Vaisali was the seat of the Yuvaraja, who was acting as a Provincial Governor. Therefore Govindagupta may reasonably be taken as Yuvaraja. The mother, therefore must have felt pride in associating her name with the heir-apparent.

ASCENDED THE THRONE : No positive inscriptional evidence is available with regard to GG's accession to the throne. Indirect suggestion, however, may be had from Mandasor Insc., ME 524 (A.D. 467), after CG II, it eulogises GG in terms indicative of imperial status :

"Yasmin nrpair astamita-pratapais sirobhiralingita-pada-padmaih,
Vicara-dolam vibudhadhipo 'pi sanka-paritah samupariroha."

It would only be at the feet of an imperial ruler that a host of kings would bow.

DATE : Govindagupta actually ascended the throne. His reign can be placed between CG's last date (412-13 A.D.) and KG I's first date (415-16 A.D.).

SHORT REIGN : Why so short a reign ? He died (a) either a natural death , or (b) was killed in a fratricidal war between him and his younger brother Kumaragupta I. Tumain Insc. of KG, 116 GE hints at the second alternative:-

"Sri-Candraguptasya Mahendra-kalpah Kumaraguptas tanayas samagram,
Raraksa sadhvim iva dharma-patnim viryagra-hastair upaguhya bhumim"

i.e. KG took hold of the throne by force, most probably from his brother Govindagupta. And, --- there is most probably a covert reference to KG I in Mandasor Insc. A.D. 437 :

"Vicara-dolam Vibudhadhipo'pi sanka-paritah samuparuroha."

In it there may be a hint that KG was not faithfully disposed towards his brother GG., and becoming jealous, conspired against him.

Vibudhadhipa is Indra. Mahendraditya is a 'biruda' of Kumaragupta I, found on his coins.

KUMARAGUPTA I

EVENTS : It is clear from his inscriptions ranging from 96 GE (415 A+D) Bilsad Stone Pillar Insc. to 128 GE (447-48 A.D.) Damodarpur and Baigram Copper-plate, that the Gupta Empire under KG I suffered no diminution.

1. Bilsad insc. has "abhivardhamana-vijaya-rajya", i.e. 'reign of ever-extending victory'.

2. Karmadanda Linga Insc. 117 GE (436 A.D.) has "catur-udadhi-salilasvadita-yasah" -- 'the fame (of KG) being tasted by the waters of the four oceans'.

3. Mandasor Stone Insc. of KG I & Bandhuvarman, 493 ME (436 A+D+) has "Catus-samudrānta-vilolamekhalām -- Sumeru-Kailasa-brhat-payodharam, Vananta-vanta-sphuta-puspa-hasinim - Kumaragupte prthivim prasasati." -- 'When Kumaragupta was reigning over the whole earth.' The other date 529 ME (472 A.D.) falls in the reign of the later Kumaragupta II, Therefore the latter part of the inscription refers to KG II.

4. The find-places of his coins also prove that his inherited Empire remained intact. These places are Ahmedabad, Bhavanagar, Satara, Ellichpur, etc.

PEACE & PROSPERITY : From his insc. and coins one can easily infer that his reign was peaceful and prosperous. There are no conflicts between KG I and other rival kings. People were devoted to social uplift and religious ceremonies. There was religious tolerance and each and every sect was free to preach its doctrines. His Bilsad insc. records the worship of Mahasvami Kartikeya; Mankuwar Insc., that of Buddha; Mandasor, that of the Sun god; and Karmadanda, that of Siva.

Prosperity is indicated by his performance of Asvamedha sacrifice in commemoration of which he issued Asvamedha coins with the legend 'Asvamedha-parakramah'. It is a costly sacrifice. Abundance of gold coins also poits to the same conclusion. Moreover, Mandasor insc. (A.D. 436 - 473) records that a guild of silk weavers migrated from the adjoining Lata (Surastra) country to Dasapura (Mandasor, C.I.), being attracted by the virtues of the king of the country - "desa-pathiva-gunapahrtāh".

There was a remarkable progress in the fields of fine arts, architecture, etc., as evidenced by fine specimens of coins and sculptures, and images of Jaina Tirthankaras and Buddha at Mathura. In Mandasor insc. Dasapura is described as 'decorated with rows of storeyed mansions (prasada-mala) like the rows of aerial chariots (vimana-mala) and with paintings (citra-karmani).

LATER EVENTS : It seems that his glory suffered an eclipse in his later days. (a) ABuddhist text tells us that Mahendra's kingdom was attacked by Yavanas, Pahlikas and Sakunas. This king Mahendra is certainly KG I, as he is represented on his coins as 'Mahendraditya'.

(b) The Bhitari Stone Pillar Insc. of his son and successor Sk.G. refers to'the enemies prepared for conquest' (svabhimata-vijigisa-prodyatanam paresam), to him as one 'who stabilized the shaking fortunes of the family' and 'spending the whole night on bare earth' (Vicalita-kula-laksmi-stambhanayodyatena, Ksiti-tala-sayaniya yena nita triyama).

(c) The enemies are specified as Pusyamitras with their resources of wealth and man-power (Samudita-bala-kosan Pusyamitrams ca jitva).

(d) Other enemies were the Huns (Hunair yasya samagatasya samare dorbhyam dhara kampita).

(e) Crown prince Sk. G. encountered these enemies, internal and external, and defeated them.

(f) Due to stress on his treasury he issued silver currency in his later age. The coinage was not of pure silver, but were minted from silver-plated copper.

ANNEXATION : (a) The small state of Dasapura in C.I. remained independent up to the time of CG II, for there is no indication of Gupta sovereignty in the Mandasor insos. of Varman kings (e.g. Mandasor St. Insc. of Naravarman, 404 A.D.). But in Mandasor Insc. of Bandhuvarman, (493 - 529 ME, A.D. 436 - 473) Dasapura appears as a feudatory state under the Imperial Guptas for the first time. KG I must have, therefore, subdued Dasapura, but there is no clear reference to this fact in his records. It is just possible that his predecessor Gov. G. subdued this State. Asvamedha coins may also indicate his new conquest.

EXTENT : KG I ruled over his inherited kingdom with the new addition of Dasapura State. His kingdom extended from Bengal (E), to Indus (W) and from Himalaya (N) to Surastra (SW) and Kanci (SE).

GOVERNORS & FEUDATORIES : 1. Ghatotkaca Gupta, mentioned in Tumain Insc. 116 GE (A.D.435-36), was probably the son or brother of KG I, who ruled over Malava with the jurisdiction over Tumbavana, about fifty miles from Eran.

2. Ciratadatta, the Governor of Pundravardhana, known from Damodarapura Copper-plates, 128 GE (A.D. 447).

3. Bandhuvarman, the feudatory ruler of Dasapura, is mentioned in Mandasor Stone Insc. 493 ME (A.D. 426).

ADMINISTRATION : 1. The Empire is described as girt by 4 oceans.

2. The king is styled as Parama-daivata, Parama-bhattaraka, Maharajadhiraja (Damodarapura Cop.-pl.).

3. Below the Emperor were feudatory rulers called 'nrpa, nrpati, parthiva, gopta.'

4. The local kingdom was called 'desa'.

5. The Empire was divided for administrative purposes into provinces called 'bhuktis', sub-divided 'visaya'.

6. The Provincial Governor was called 'Uparika-maharaja'.

7. Under him was District officer or Magistrate 'visayapati'.

8. District Head Quarters were called 'adhisthana'.

9. District Office 'visayadhikarana'.

10. District had a sub-division called 'vithi'.

11. Officer incharge of a sub-division was 'Ayuktaka' (Kalaikuri ins.).

12. Princes served as Provincial Governors, e.g., Prince Ghatotkaca was Governor of Airikina-pradesa.

13. Visayapatis (District Officers or Magistrates) were appointed by the Uparika (Governor) with the formal sanction of the king, to whom the homage of both was due.

14. There were Ministers in attendance on the Emperor at the Head Qrs

15. In the Dist. Hd. Qrs. (adhisthana) were located Dist. offices and courts (adhikarana). The Dist. Magistrate was associated and assisted in his administration (puroge samvyavaharati) with an advisory council of non-officials representing different interests of the locality, viz., (i) Mayor (Nagara-sresthi), (ii) Representative of

Merchants' Guild (sarthavaha), (iii) Chief of the Guild of Artisans (prathama-kulika), (iv) Chief of the Union of Scribes (prathama-kayastha

16. The Staff of Sub-Divisional Office included Pustapala (Record-keeper), Kayastha (Scribes) and Kulika (Representative craftsman).

17. Transaction of Land formed an important part of the functions of the District Magistrates (Visayapati). Government gave facilities to private donors intending to make gifts of land for a religious or a charitable purpose. Such gifts were facilitated by a prescribed procedure. Ordinarily land could not be transferred without the permission of the Government. Its right was regulated by 'nivi-dharma' or 'upadaksaya-nivi'. By it the religious or charitable purpose was to be promoted out of the income of the land-grants, so that the land could not be transferred or alienated in any way for profit.

The sanction was given on the reports of its officers, Pustapalas.

The sale price of land is also indicated. It was at the rate of 3 dinaras for 1 kulyavapa. Kulya = Kula, i.e. that amount of land which can be ploughed by two ploughs. Vapa is the area which is sown.

RECORDS :

1.	Bilsad Stone Pillar Inscription,	GE 96	A+D+ 415 A.D.
2.	Gadhwa Stone Inscription	GE 96	A.D. 417 A.D
3.	Udayagiri Cave Inscription	GE 106	A.D. 425
4.	Dhanaidaha Copper-plate	GE 113	A.D. 432
5.	Mathura inscription	GE 113	A.D. 432
6.	Tumain Stone Inscription	GE 116	A.D. 435
7.	Karmadanda Stone Inscription	GE 117	A.D. 436
8.	Damodarapura Copper-plate	GE 124	A.D. 443
9.	Damodarapura Copper-plate	GE 128	A.D. 447
10.	Baigram Copper-plate	GE 128	A.D. 447
11.	Mankuwar Buddha Stone Image	GE 129	A.D. 448
12.	Mandasor Stone Insc. of Bandhu varman and Kumaragupta I		A.D. 436

COINS : (a) Gold coins :-

(i) Archer type, (ii) Swordsman type, (iii) Asvamedha type, (iv) Horseman type, (v) Lion-slayer type, (vi) Tiger-slayer type, (vii) Peacock type, (viii) Pratapa-type, (ix) Elephant rider type.

(b) Silver coins :-

First Gupta silver coinage was inaugurated by GG II after his conquest of Western Ksatrapas territories. Kumaragupta I issued silver coins in great abundance.

(c) Copper coins.

TITLES : (a) Sri-Mahendra, (b) Asvamedha-Mahendra, (c) Ajita-Mahendra,

(d) Simha-Mahendra, (e) Sri-Mahendrasimha, (f) Mahendrakumara, (g) Simha-Vikrama, (h) Vyaghra-parakrama, (i) Sri-pratapa, (j) Mahendraditya

FAMILY : From the inscriptions of KG I, we know that —

1. his wife was Anantadevi, probably a Kadamba Princess,

2. he had two sons, Puragupta and Skandagupta,

3. Purugupta was born of Anantadevi, Skandagupta was either her son or from another queen whose name is not mentioned in the records

4. Ghatotkacagupta is said to be a third son of KG I, but no definite proof is available.

DATES :

First	96 GE	- A.D. 415	(Bilsad Stone Insc.)
Last	136 GE	- A.D. ~~445~~ 455	(Silver coins)

Fight with Pusyamitras and Hunas in the later years of his reign.

SKANDAGUPTA

ACCESSION : First date - Earliest date is 136 GE (A.D. 455) known Junagadh Rock Insc. of his Governor Parnadatta.

Last date - GE #148 (A.D. 467) known from his silver coins.

WAR OF SUCCESSION ? 1. (a) Sk. G. a son and successor of KG I, known from Bhitari Pillar Inscription of Sk. G.

(b) Purugupta a son and successor of KG I, known from Bhitari Seal of KG II or III.

2. (a) Both could not be identical, because :

(i) Not practice of putting second names on official documents. (ii) Similarity of coins bearing names of Sk. G. and PG, due to the decline of the Empire.

(b) Nor did they divide the Empire, because :

(i) Sk. G. was an all India Emperor. His records are found at several places in N. India incl. Bhitari, Nalanda, etc., (ii) The records of both are found at the same places and also those of the successors of Pu. G. Inscriptions of Bu. G. are found at Sarnath, Banaras, Eran, and west India.

3. Hence Majumdar suggested war of succession.

(a) Omission of mother's name in Bhitari St. Ins. implies that Sk.G. was not legitimate heir apparent, while there is mention of PG's mother as Mahadevi Anantadevi in Bhitari Seal Ins., making him legal successor.

(b) That Sk.G. got the throne from PG after war is hinted at in Jun. R. Ins. "Vyapetya sarvan manujendra-putranl Laksmih svayam yam varayamcakara" (l. 5).

(c) and also in Bhitari St. P. Ins. -

"Vicalita-kula-laksmim stanbhanayodyatena, ..."

The conflicted referred to here is between two brothers Sk.G. and PG.

But (a) the omission of Sk. G's mothers name proves nothing because the epigraphic practice on the point is not uniform. Or it may have been due to scribe's omission by mistake or to his enthusiasm to eulogize his patron and Sk's father without any digression.

(b) This verse does not refer to any fratricidal war. On the

other hand it implies the previous practice of the selection of the heir-apparent on the basis of merit rather than of birth. The description is given in a poetic way.

(c) Menace referred to in the Bhitari St. P. Ins. is not certainly from the scions of the Guptas, but clearly from the feudatory rulers Pusyamitras and foreign invadors Hunas. Cf. "Sumudita-bala-kosan."

4. Sk.G. is the immediate successor, as (a) the last date of KG I on his coins is 136 GE (A.D. 455-56), (b) the earliest date of Sk.G. is also 136 GE (A.D. 455-56) on Jun. Rock Ins., and (c) nobody could intervene between KG I and Sk.G. Purugupta may have ascended the throne after Sk.G. Hence it follows that there was no war of succession.

WAR AGAINST PUSYAMITRAS : Sk.G. began his martial activities as a Crown Prince in the later period of his father's life. These campaigns were completed in his own reign after the death of his father. Cf. "Pitari divam upete viplutam vamsa-laksmim, Sva-bhuja-bala-vijitarir yah pratisthapya bhuyah" (Bhitari 6).

PUSYAMITRAS : (a) Acc. to R.D.Bannerji, they were the first wave of the Hunas. But, as they had entered India for the first time, we cannot expect them to have Indianized name of Pusyamitras. Like Sakas (Azes, Azilises, Vonones), Kusanas (Wema, Kujula, Kaniska, Huviska), Hunas (Toramana) and Greeks (having legends on coins only in Greek for a long time before Indianizing them), they too must have had their foreign and original name, had they come from outside.

(b) Visnu Purana says that tribal kingdom of Pusyas was situated in Kosala, i.e., Eastern part of C.P., Chhatisgarh, Raipur and mountain Mekala near Orissa. The rulers of these regions might have formed a confederacy and have attacked the adjoining Gupta territory. They had a strong army, rich treasury and ample resources. Sk.G. conquered Pusyamitras who had gathered all their strength and resources. He had to strive hard to overpower his foes, so much so that he had to spend a whole night sleeping on bare ground (Bhitari St. P. Ins.).

WAR WITH THE HUNAS : The original home of the Hunas was NW China. Under pressure they migrated to the west. One branch of them went to Europe, and came in clash with the Roman Empire. The other branch, called the White Hunas (Ephthalites) conquered the Oxus valley and Gandhara, fought against Sassanians of Persia, but were defeated. Then they

moved towards India, where they met similar crushing defeat at the hands of Skandagupta. Afterwards they attacked Persia and defeated Piroz, the Sessanian king in 484 A.D. This encouraged them to proceed again to India.

BATTLE-FIELD : Sk.G. must have fought with the Hunas in Western India, for (i) Jun. R. Ins. refers to Mlecchas "...prathayanti yasamsi yasya ripavo 'pi ... Mlecchha-desesu" (4). These Mlecchas must have been the Hunas, who are clearly mentioned in the Bhitari St. P. Ins. as conquered by Sk.G. "Hunair yasya samagatasya samare dorbhyam dhara kampita".

(ii) Hunas were a great menace to the country. There was a danger of their repeated invasion. Hence Sk.G. took special pians in selecting a befitting Governor of Surastra. He found one in Parnadatta.

TIME : The fight was very severe. By the year 141 GE (A.D.460) all these wars were over and perfect peace prevailed as indicated by :

(i) Kahaum St. P. Insc. Of Sk.G., 141 GE (A.D.460) "rajye ... Skandaguptasya sante, Varse ...". Sante does not mean the last year of his reign, as his silver coin bear the date 148 GE.

(ii) The later part of his Jun. R. Ins. (136, 137, 138 GE, 455-56-57) also gives an impression of peaceful times. Works of public welfare like the construction of tanks, etc., cannot be done under the stress of war.

WAR WITH VAKATAKAS : Balaghata Cop.-pl. of Prthivisena II states Narendrasena (A.D. 435-470) as Kosala-Mekala-Malavadhipati. The Vakatakas were contesting Gupta overlordship in parts of western India. But Sk.G. set back the aggression. This gets confirmation from the fact that Prthivisena, son of Narendrasena, recovered the sunken fortune of his family, after Sk.G.'s death, during PG's reign, as stated in the Vakataka records : "nimagna-vamsasyoddhartuh" and "Kosala-Mekala-Malavadhipatyabhyarcita-sasanah".

EXTENT OF THE EMPIRE : He ruled over the whole of Northern India, from Kathiawar in the west, to Bengal in the east. Towards the west, the Empire included regions like Surastra, Cambay, Malava and Gujrat. From Indus in the N W and Himalaya in the N up to Kanci in the south.

ADMINISTRATION : The empire was divided into Provinces under Governors. A Province was called 'desa, avani' ; Governor - gopta (Parnadatta,

gopta of Surastra) ; and the Dist. Officer, visaya-pati (Sarvanaga, visayapati of Antarvedi). The administration of a visaya (Dist.) was carried on by officers put in charge of different departments, such as Agraharika (incharge of land-grants ?), Saulkika (incharge of customs), Gaulmika (incharge of forests), etc., The cities were placed in charge of executive officers. Thus, Cakrapalita was Nagara-raksaka (Mayor) of Girinar. Sk. G. took great interest in the general administration of his country. He paid due attention to the defence of his frontiers. He was very partcular in the choice of good personnel for the administration of his country. He picked those who were honest and who took interest in the general uplift of the society. He took extraordinary care in selecting the Governor of Surastra which was vulnerable to foreign invasion. For many days he thought and exercised his mind, and at last hit upon Parnadatta as the only man able to shoulder the burden of that administration.

RELIGIONS : 1. Religious tolerance, 2. Philanthropy on the part of the public, 3. All religions flourished --- He was himself a Vaisnava (parama-bhagavata); Kahaum Insc., Jaina ; Sculptures of Jaina Tirthankaras, and donation to the temple of the Sun (Indor Cop.-pl.) for burning a lamp at night.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS : (a) Due to stress of war, there was a heavy strain on his treasury, which is evident from his coins of inferior gold and silver. (b) In later times he raised the weight of coins from 124 gr. to 148 gr. and their standard from silver dinaras to gold svarnas. (c) His silver and coppercoins were also in use. (d) Only twotypes of gold coins, the Archer,and the king and queen (Laksmi ?) types are found. (e) Industry seems to have been organized under sremis or guilds (e.g. Tailika Sreni). (f) The guilds acted as Banks, donation of money to Guilds for public benefaction. (g) Interest in works of public welfare, like the construction and repairs to lakes. High skill in Engineering. (Cf. Construction and repairs to Sudarsana lake).

PURUGUPTA

ACCESSION : He came to the throne, as an old man, after the death of his brother SkG. He was the son of Maharajadhiraja-sri-Kumaragupta (I) and queen Mahadevi (known from Bhitari Seal of KG III).

PERIOD OF REIGN : From A.D. 467 (being the last date of Sk.G. known from his silver coins) to A.D. 473 (being the earliest date of his son and successor KG II, on Sarnath Inscription).

EVENTS : 1. He lost his western domains, i.e., (a) Malava and Central India, as is shown by the absence of coins. (b) His territory was restricted only to Bengal, Bihar, Eastern part of U.P., as his coins are only found in these regions. Coins are very few and are only of the Archer type. This suggests his short rule and straitened conditions.

2. Cause of Fall : (a) Hunas might have captured NW part of his Empire. (b) Vakatakas occupied the southern, western, SW parts of the Empire. Vakatakas under Narendrasena (A.D. 435-470) were contesting against the Gupta overlordship. Sk.G. subued them . After his death, Prthivisena II s/o Narendrasena, recovered his sunken family fortune, as stated in 'ninagna -vamsasyoddharttuh', of him who raised and restored the sunken family. Also 'Kosala-Mekala-Malavadhipatyabhyarcita-sasana'. The time of Prthivisena II is 470-485.

LITERARY REFERENCES : Paramartha in his "Vasubandhu" mentions that Vikramaditya sent his son Baladitya to Budhagupta. According to him, the Capital of PG can be located at Ayodhya.

Though PG lost a great part of his Empire, still he retained his title Sri-Vikrama on the analogy of Vikramaditya, as is known from his coins. Nalanda Clay Seal gives Narasimhagupta Baladitya as the son of PG.

Thus Vikramaditya of "Vasubandhu" may be Purugupta Sri-Vikrama. Ayodhya was 'jaya-skandhavara', seat of Guptas from the time of Samudragupta, as known from Gaya grant.

KUMARAGUPTA II, KRAMADITYA

(Sarnath Inscription)

SUCCESSION : KG II is the immediate successor of PG. His earliest date is known from Sarnath Insc. on a stone image of Buddha, 154 GE (473)

RECORDS :

1. Sarnath Buddha St. Image Ins., GE 154 (A.D. 473).
2. Mandasor Ins. of Budhavarman & KG, ME 493, 529 (436, 472-73 A.D., the latter part being in the time of KG II).
3. Khoh Cop.-pl. Ins. of Parivrajaka Maharaja Hastin, GE 156 (A.D. 475).
4. Gold coins.

CONTENTS OF RECORDS : Sarnath insc. records the event in KG's reign. Abhayamitra instals an image of Buddha at a place like Sarnath as a centre of Buddhism. KG himself was a Vaisnava, but like his predecessors, he too was tolerant of other religions which flourished under him. The insc. is Buddhistic in character and the image is fine specimen of art.

The first part of the Mandasor insc. and the date (ME 493) given therein refers to the reign of KG I. And the second part containing the date ME 529, falls certainly in the time of KG II. In the time of KG I, a guild of silk weavers migrated from Lata desa to Dasapura (Mandasor) in Malava (C.I.) and built a Sun-temple in A.D. 436. In A.D. 473, during KG II's reign, the same guild effected repairs to the temple. "Bahuna samatitena kalenanyais ca parthivaih - Vyasiryataika-deso 'sya bhavanasya tato 'dhuna." (36). Some translate it as 'A part of the temple was damaged by many kings', saying that the root √sr being transitive, it should have an object which is 'ekadesa' here, and the subject is 'parthivaih'. From this they infer that the Hunas, who attacked India at that time, damaged the temple, because an Indian could not have done so. But, (i) Hunas did not achieve any success before 6th cent. A.D., particularly in this part of the country (Mandasor, C.I.). (ii) It is strange that one single invader could not have damaged one part of the temple, and it needed the effort of several kings to do so ! (iii) Hunas were not opposed to Sun-worship. A Sun-temple was built during the reign of the Huna king Mihirakula. (iv) In Sanskrit we have many instances in which the root √sr is used intransitively, e.g., "Mūrdhni sarva-lokasya visiryate vane 'thava". The usage is called 'kartr-karmani prayogah'. It is not necessary that this root should always be 'sakarmaka' (transitive). Hence kings cannot be the vandals.

FLEET's INTERPRETATION : "As much time elapsed and many kings passed, one part of the temple fell into disrepair." Vyasiryata being used here intransitively, needs no object. Its subject is 'eka-desah' and not 'parthivaih' which is dependent for its elucidation 'atitena', i.e. 'somatitair anyais ca parthivaih'. Here 'anyaih' is also significant inasmuch as many kings passed but none of them came forth for the repair of the temple. The many kings that passed between A.D. 436 and 473 were : KG I (415-455), Sk.G. (455-467), and PG (467-473). Though the period of 36 years is not very long, but to the writer of the Prasasti it appeared so (bahuna kalena). Moreover, by the passing of three kings during this period, the period, though short, looked like a long period.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE INSCRIPTION : From the inscription we may infer that the political conditions prevailing during the reigns of Sk.G. and PG were such that they did not allow them or the guild of silk weavers to undertake the repairs of the temple. But under the reign of KG II, the guild found the conditions favourable for repairs to the temple. It follows, therefore, that KG II established a peaceful state of affairs once again in the country under his rule. Silk weavers resumed their industry and commercial activities, accumulated wealth and did the repair Thus, it can reasonably be inferred that KG II restored his lost family prestige.

KHOH COPPER-PLATE INSCRIPTION OF PARIVRAJAKA MAHARAJA HASTIN
GE 156, A.D.475

The insc. belongs to the time of KG II, when the Gupta kings were in the enjoyment of sovereignty (Gupta-nrpa-rajya-bhuktau). This shows that Hastin was a feudatory under the Imperial Gupta ruler KG II. He was one of the most important of feudatories who gave away gifts of thousands of cows, horses, elephants, gold coins and land.

Hastin himself is described as a sovereign who had feudatories of his own (pada-pindopajivinah), subsisting on homage to the Royal feet.

EXPLANATION OF WORDS IN THE PLATE :

1. Sasana : Royal Charter of land grant.

2. Agrahara : The village given away in donation to a Brahmana (Cf. use in this sense by Kalidasa in Raghuvamsa).

3. Udranga : In Sasvata-kosa -- a tax, derived from ut-√ṛ or from ut-√raj ; nature of the tax not defined ; must be corresponding to the usual share of the produce due to the State, which varied from time to time. In the Smṛtis it is stated as one-sixth.

4. Uparikara : With Sanskrit 'upari' Prakrit 'upari' may be connected Marathi 'opari' meaning a tenant who has no proprietory right on the land, but is a mere tiller. Hence 'uparikara' means a tax levied on cultivators who do not own the land they cultivate. But this method of interpretation is not scientific, because we cannot say that Marathi 'opari' was used in the sense of Skt. 'upari'. It really means : upari = something above. Hence uparikara = a tax in addition to the main tax, surcharge or the super-tax of the modern times.

5. Acata-bhata-pravesya : 1. That which should not be visited by Regular (bhata) and Irregular (cata) troops. Their visit to the 'agraharas' was prohibited in order to maintain their sanctity and save the villagers from forced and burdensome taxation and contributions. But this interpretation is not reasonable. Bhata may mean Regular troops but 'cata' has no authority for its meaning as Irregular troops. Bhagwanlal translates the expression as meaning 'swindlers or thieves (cata)' and 'soldiers (bhata)' and treats the compound as 'catan prati bhatah' soldiers employed against the robbers, i.e. Policemen.

In ancient India an 'agrahara' was a holy place, so

Policemen were prohibited from entering it. They were not allowed to disturb or harass it. Though this meaning of the expression has not found favour with many an epigraphist, it is so far the best one.

6. Cora-danda-varjam : (a) 'with the exception of the fines imposed on thieves by the king.' Whereas 'udranga' and 'uparikara' were assigned to the grantee, the fines imposed on thieves were preserved by the rulers. (b) The fines on thieves is the function of the judiciary and not of the Revenue Department. Therefore, in parting with the revenue of the village, transfer of judiciary or executive power could not be implied, and, the mention of the exception of fines on thieves could not arise at all. Therefore, 'cora-danda' may be translated not as fine imposed on thieves, but a tax imposed on villagers for protection against thieves. This can be compared with the present day 'chowkidara' tax to meet the salary of the watchman. Hence 'cora-danda-varjam' means 'with the exception of tax for the protection of the village from thieves.'

THE TERRITORY : The territory of the Parivrajaka kings, known from the find spots of their copper-plates included Nagaudh, Ajayagarh, and Jaso States, situated in 18 forest kingdoms.

The first king was Susarman, who was religious-minded, king and recluse. In one of the plates Susarman is called the sage Kapila and also 'catur-dasa-vidya-sthana'.

The dynasty comprised the family of Susarman, whose descendant was Devadya. Devadya's son was Prabhanjana, his son was Damodara, his son was Hastin, and Hastin's son was Samksobha.

For Hastin we have dates ranging from 475-510 A.D. Taking a 100 years for four generations before Hastin, we may place the beginning of the dynasty at about 375 A.D., i.e. in the time of Samudragupta.

The expression "Gupta-nrpa-rajya-bhuktau" in the plates shows that they were the feudatories of the Guptas.

One of the dates of Samksobha is A.D. 528.

PURPOSE & METHOD OF MAKING LAND-GRANTS :

Purpose : (a) Religious merit, (b) Upkeep of temples, (c) Carrying on worship, (d) Effecting repairs, (e) Enabling Brahmanas to study the Vedas and perform sacrifices, (f) Because applauded in the Puranas, Smrtis and Epics as the best form of charity.

From very early times the Indian kings and landlords have been making land-grants. The villages granted were called 'agraharas' and were held in sanctity. Their protection was a subject of the foremost care of the State. This practice of land donations seems to have become

very popular from Gupta times onwards, so we have a large number of land-grants from the 4th to the 12th century A.D.

Method : (a) The grants were recorded in Charters. (b) The Charters were drafted according to an established form, which had already become fixed by the time of Yajnavalkya. (c) They were written on a piece of cloth or engraved on copper-plates : 'Pate va tamra-patte va'. Due to the perishable nature of the cloth, copper-plates were preferred. (d) Contents : i. Name of the ruling king with his genealogy, ii. Date of making the grant, iii. Name of the village or place granted and the demarcation of its boundaries, iv. Emmeration of the privileges to the grantee,(sodranga, soparikara, etc.), v. In the end verses from scriptures applauding the grant and censuring any interference with it. vi. Execution of the task was entrusted to the officer called Sandhi-vigrahika, vii. Grantees were not made the absolute owners rulers of the land, but only the revenues were assigned to them.

All the grants conform to these requirements.

GOLD COINS : (a) Legend on the coins : "Maharajadhiraja-Sri-Kumaragupta, Kramadityah" and "Kramadityah". This shows that he held the imperial title.

(b) About 20 coins ascribed to Kumaragupta are preserved in the British and Indian Museums. There are only a few of the heavier type. It is not definite whether all these coins are of KG II, or they also include those of KG I and KG III.

DATES : First date --- 473 A.D. (From Sarnath Insc. of KG II).

Last date --- 476 A.D. (From Sarnath Buddha Stone Image Insc. of his successor Budhagupta).

EXTENT : From Bengal to the eastern part of U.P., with Malava in the S.W.

BUDHAGUPTA

Purugupta

Kumaragupta II	Budhagupta	Narasimhagupta
(473 Sarnath Ins. relation not mentioned - c. 476)	(476 Sar.B.S.Insc. - 494 Sil. coins) Relation in Nalanda Clay Seal	(c. 495 - ?) Bhitari Seal of KG III gives relation

SUCCESSION : KG's (II) date on his Sarnath Insc. is GE 154 (A.D. 473) and earlier date of Budhagupta is 157 GE (A.D. 476) on his Sarnath B.S. insc. Hence BG is the immediate successor of KG II. But his Sarnath B.S. Insc. and other inscs. do not give his genealogy, or his relation with the Guptas. Only his Nalanda Clay Sealings give a complete genealogy, from the beginning up to BG and mention him as the son and successor of Purugupta. Bhitari Seal gives Narasimhagupta as the son and successor of PG. Therefore BG and NG are real brothers , and both of them the sons of Purugupta along with Kumaragupta II.

IMPERIAL STATUS ? No title indicative of imperial status. Some inscs. like his Sarnath B.S.I.Insc. simply reads 'Budhagupte prasasati'. But,

(a) He is given the epithets of 'Parama-bhattaraka-Maharajadhiraja-Budhagupta' in Damodarpur Copper-plate. (b) He has Provincial Governors, such as Maharaja Surasmicandra of Malava, ruling the territory between Narmada and Kalindi, under BG (Eran Insc.). (c) Damodarpur Copper-plate also mentions his Governors in Pundravardhana-bhukti, as Brahmadatta and Jayadatta.

FEUDATORY KINGS AND GOVERNORS : 1. Brahmadatta and Jayadatta as Uparika-maharajas (Governors) of Pundravardhana-bhukti in Bengal, known from Damodarpur Copper-plates, A.D. 482 and undated respectively.

2. Maharaja Surasmicandra : feudatory ruler of Malava, the territory lying between Narmada and Kalindi, known from Eran St. P. Insc. (Under Surasmicandra was the Dist. Magistrate -- visayapati -- Maharaja Matrvisnu :: Eran S.P.Ins.) (Under Jayadatta was Dist. Magist. in Kotivarsa visaya, Ayuktaka-sandaka :: Damodar. C.P.).

3. Parivrajaka Maharaja Hastin in Khoh Coppor-plate grant (GE 165, A.D. 482) recognises Gupta overlordship.

TERRITORY : In the East --- Pundravardhana in N. Bengal (Dam. Cop. Pl.)

In the West --- Malava (Eran St. Pil. Insc.).

In the South --- Kalindi.

In the North --- Ganga.

It included Banaras -- Sarnath B.S.I.Ins., and for Central India he issued gold coins. He kept his inherited kingdom intact.

ADMINISTRATION : Provinces ruled by Governors and Feudatories who were helped in the administration by the Deputy Governors.

Damodarpur Cop.-pl. ---- The District Magistrate (visayapati) was helped in administration by an Advisory Council of four members representatives of different interests of the locality, viz., 1. Nagarasresthi -- President of the Chamber of Commerce (named Dhrtipala), 2. Prathama-kulika -- Foreman of the Guild of Artisans (Dhrtimitra), 3. Sarthavaha -- Representative of Merchants of the city (Bandhumitra), 4. Prathama-kayastha -- Chief Secretary to Administrative Council (Sambapala).

Transfer of land and sale of land were regulated by the State. The Copper-plate grants give the administrative machinery and procedure for grants of land for public purposes, charitable and religious endowments, etc. was to submit an application for it. The land to be granted should not cause any loss of Revenue to the State. Accordingly, such land is required to be : (a) aprada -- not yet settled, (b) aprahata -- not yet cultivated, or (c) khila-ksetra -- no man's land.

The customary price stated in the inscriptions is at the rate of 3 Dinaras for each 'kulyavapa', which means the area of land on which one kulya of seeds can be sown, (one kulya weighing 8 Dronas).

The grant of the applied for land by the Government depended upon the recommendations of a Committee of three local Record-keepers, called Pustapalas.The purpose for which the land was granted was usually the performance of daily sacrifices, etc. by the Brahmanas.

Provincial Governor, Uparika Maharaja, was assisted by a council of local non-officials : (1) Mahattara-s, (2) Asta-kuladhikarana-s, (3) Gramika-s, and (4) Kutumbina-s.

COINS : Budhagupta issued silver coinage of Central India type, with his own name and with his title as 'avanipati'.

Bharsar hoard of coins bearing the name of Prakasaditya and a letter 3 under the image of the king. The 'Manju-sri-mula-kalpa' states that

Sriman 3 succeeded KG II. As BG succeeded KG II, therefore Sriman 3, Prakasaditya, and Budhagupta are one and the same person. So the coins of Prakasaditya are of Budhagupta.

INDICATIONS OF DECLINE : Though BG exercised his sway over the whole of his inherited empire of northern India, it is obvious that the Gupta power and prestige was on its decline. The Feudatories Maitrakas and Parivrajakas mention the Guptas in vague terms. Governors of Malava and Bengal, called only 'uparika' in the time of KG I, were now called 'Maharaja'.

DATES : First date GE 157 (A.D. 476) , known from Sarnath B.S.I.Insc.

Last date GE 175 (A.D. 494) , known from his silver coins.

RECORDS :

1.	Sarnath Buddha Stone Image Inscription	A.D. 476
2.	Pahapur Copper-plate	A.D. 478
3.	Damodarpur Copper-plate	A.D. 482
4.	Damodarpur Copper-plate	
5.	Eran Pillar Insc.	A.D. 484
6.	Nalanda Clay Seal	

NARASIMHAGUPTA (BĀLĀDITYA)

SUCCESSION : Son of Purugupta and Candradevi (read by Fleet as Vatsadevi ; by H.Sastri as Vainyadevi ; by Chakravarti as Candradevi) An Bhitari Seal of Kumaragupta III. He is known from the same Seal. He was the brother of Budhagupta whose Nalanda Clay Seal describes BG as son of PG. Succeeded BG in A.D. 495 (BG's last date being A.D. 494).

COINS : Title 'Baladitya' on some gold coins. The large number of heavier type of gold coins proves the truth of Arya-manju-sri-mula-kalpa, that Baladitya's Empire was 'nis-sapatna and akantaka', i.e. without rivals and foes. He issued no silver coins.

YWAN CHWANG's ACCOUNT : Yuan Chwang (629 A.D.) in his detailed account of India wrote that the tyrant Mihirakula invaded Magadha and was defeated by king Baladitya, who, like a Buddhist, did not kill him but released him. But the date of Mihirakula, determined on epigraphic grounds, is A.D. 532 and the reign of NG (in A.D. 495) cannot be stretched to that length. The name of Baladitya's son and successor given by Yuan Chwang is Vajra, while Bhitari Seal gives Kumaragupta. The statement of Yuan Chwang is, in its very nature, vague and based on legends and hearsay.

RECORDS : 1. Bhitari Seal of Kumaragupta III

2. Nalanda Seal of Narasimhagupta.

VAINYAGUPTA

SOURCE : (a) Known from Gunaighar Copper-plate Inscription, GE 188 (A.D. 507), stated as 'Mahadeva-padanudhyato Maharaja-sri Vainyaguptah' Gunaighar is in Tipperah Distt., in Bengal.

(b) Nalanda Clay Seal describes him as Maharajadhiraja.

(c) Gold coins of Archer type, with Garuda symbol. Allan wrongly read the name as Candra on these coins. This would need the addition of another Candragupta (III ?) to the list, a name not known from other sources, whereas the name Vainya is attested by epigraphic evidence.

RELATION : Neither gone[illegible] [illegible]wn from any record. VG is described in Gunaig[illegible] C.P. as '[illegible]padanudhyatah', a devotee of Siva, while Gupta [illegible] '[illegible]gavata'. Hence his relation with the Imperial [illegible]stioned. [illegible]

(i) His gold coins with G[illegible] indicate his Vaisnava faith.

(ii) Religion of a monarch is [illegible]rion in deciding his dynasty.

STATUS : (a) He may be a feudatory o[illegible] local ruler or Governor of B Bengal as indicated by his epithet 'Maharaja' in Gunaighar Cop.-plate. But, (i) If he was a local ruler of Bengal, his clay seals could not been found at Nalanda. (ii) On the other hand, he is proved to be an Emperor, because Gunai. Cop.pl. states Vijayasena as hia Viceroy and Rudradatta as his vassal or feudatory king. (iii) He issued gold coins which was the privilege of an Imperial ruler. (iv) Nalanda Clay Seal calls him as 'Maharajadhiraja'. (v) The epithet 'Maharaja' only on Gun. C.P. may be a slip on the part of the scribe. KG I is also described as only 'Maharaja' in Mankuwar Image Inscription, and SG too as 'Maharaja' in Riddhapur plates.

RELIGIONS : Saivism : Gunaighar Copper-plate.

Vaisnavism : Gold coins.

Buddhism : Vainyagupta seems to the first monarch donating a piece of land for the maintonance of a Buddhist Vihara (Gun. C.Pl.)

ADMINISTRATION : Gunaighar Copper Plate :

Provincial administration through Viceroys and Kumaramatyas, viz., 'Sri-maha-samanta-maharaja-Vijayasena'. Vijayasena held several offices such as 'Dutaka' (Messenger), 'Maha-pratihara' (High Chamberlain, 'Maha-pilu-pati

'Maha-pilu-pati' (Commander of Elephant Forces), 'Pancadhikaranoparika' (President of the Board of 5 administrative offices), 'Patyuparika' (Chief Officer of Accounts Department), 'Pur-paloparika' (President of the Board of City Mayors or Chief Police Officer).

Kumaramatyas, incharge of certain Visayas, were under Viceroys. Dutaka was a superior officer to Kumaramatya.

Sandhi-vigrahadhikarana was the Minister for Peace and War, viz., Kayastha Naradatta, the scribe of the Gunaighar Copper Plate.

The old practice of administration was kept up from the time of Kumaragupta I up to his time.

RECORDS : 1. Gunaighar Copper plate, dated A.D. 507.

2. Nalanda Seal.

DATE : Gunaighar Copper Plate, GE 188 (A.D. 507).

BHĀNUGUPTA

SOURCE : Eran Stone Pillar Insc. of the time of Bhanugupta, GE 191 (A.D. 510)

RELATION : Neither genealogy nor parentage mentioned in any record, but the ending (-gupta) to his name indicates that he was related with the Guptas.

STATUS : The insc. describes him only as 'raja mahan'-- a mighty king ; 'jagati pravirah' -- a great hero in the world; and 'Partha-samah' equal to Arjuna (in bravery). No Imperial title (like 'maharajadhiraja') is attached to him, not even 'maharaja'.

As regards the position of Bhanugupta in the Gupta dynasty, we may assume that : (a) Either he was a Viceroy of the Malava (Eran) during the time of the Emperor Vainyagupta, and fought the battle of Eran with Hunas, on behalf of his Emperor ruler Vainyagupta.

(b) Or he was an Imperial sovereign ruling over Eran (Malava) contemporaneously with Vainyagupta. In the latter case, the division of the Gupta Empire must be presumed, viz., Eastern region as far as Nalanda ruled by Vainyagupta, and Western region (Malava) ruled by Bhanugupta.

(c) In any case, Bhanugupta cannot be the successor of VG on the Gupta throne in Magadha, on the score of chronological difficulties.

GUPTAS LOST MALAVA : The two brothers Matrvismu and Dhanyavismu raised a flagstaff at Eran in GE 165 (A.D. 484) in the time of Budhagupta (Eran Stone Pillar Insc. of Budhagupta, GE 165)

Dhanyavismu, again, erected a Vismu temple with Varaha image at Eran during the 1st regnal year of Toramana, the Huna king (Eran Stone Boar Insc. of Toramana, Regnal year 1).

This implies change of rulers within one generation, at least in this part (C.I.) of the Empire.

FIGHT WITH THE HUNAS : He fought with the Hunas either as an Imperial ruler (sovereign), or, being a Governor, on behalf of his Imperial ruler Vainyagupta. Eran St. Pill. Ins. of Bhanugupta, GE 191 (A.D. 510), tells us that BG, along with Goparaja fought at Eran fierce and famous battle. Goparaja was killed in the battle-field and was followed by his wife on his funeral pyre.

It is tempting to sugg...

This gets some confirmation from Dhanyavisnu's Eran Stone Boar Insc. bearing the date in Toramana's regnal year 1. Guptas, thus, lost Malava.

RECORDS :

Eran Stone Pillar Insc. of Dhanyavisnu, A.D. 510.

DATE : A.D. 510 (Eran Stone Pillar Insc. of Dhanyavisnu).

MAITRAKAS OF VALABHI

WHO WERE THE MAITRAKAS ? (A) Some scholars have mistaken them for foreign people. Their view is based on the interpretation of an expression occuring in their records : "Prasabha-pranatāmitrānām Maitrakānām atula-bala-sapatna-mandalabhoga-samsakta-samprahāra-śata-labdha-pratāpah ..... Bhatārkkah", which they construe as 'atulam balam teṣām te atula-balāh, te sapatnāh, teṣām prasabha-pranatāmitrānām Maitrakānām mandalabhogah, tasmin samsakta-samprahara-śaten labdhah pratapah yena, sa Bhatarkkah.' i.e. Bhatarkka bowed down forcibly his enemies who were Maitrakas. Keilhorn emphasises the point by saying that there is no word like 'kule' or 'vamse' to connect 'Maitrakanam' with Bhatarkkah. Therefore Maitrakanam should be taken with sapatnanam.

BUT : (a) The interpretation is open to grammatical objection that a Bahuvrihi compound cannot be interpreted in this manner.

(b) In order to connect Maitrakanam with Bhatarkkah, it is not necessary to have the word 'vamse' or 'kule', e.g. Vakatakanam ..... Therefore Maitrakanam should be connected with Bhatarkkah, viz., "Maitrakanam Bhatarkkah", i.e., "Maitrakanam kule Bhatarkkah".

(B) The other argument for their foreign origin is ; Their family name 'Maitraka' is derived from Mitra, the Sun. Therefore they must have been the Sun-worshipping people of Persia, who came to India with the Hunas.

BUT : The Maitraka kings were usually the worshippers of Siva. Only one ruler out of a 100 kings is described as 'paramaditya-bhakta', and even he is not the first ruler. First seven of these kings are styled as 'parama-Mahesvara'.

It is difficult to understand the significance of their style " "Maitraka'. It is doubtful if the word is connected with Maitreyaka, which means a worshipper in a Buddhistic temple, or is the designation of bards born of a Ksatriya father and Vaisya mother. Anyway, Bhatarkka of Valabhi is styled as 'Maitraka'.

HOW DID THEY COME TO BE ESTABLISHED ? About a hundred available records of the dynasty supply the dates ranging from Gupta-Valabhi Era 183 to 447 (A.D. 502 to 766). From the beginning up to Dharasena IV,

the kings bear the title 'Maharaja' or some other title of feudatory position, but no title of Imperial rank. It has been held that the Maitraka kings revolted against the Guptas and established a separate kingdom of their own.

BUT : this appears to be incorrect, for the third ruler of the dynasty, Dronasimha, describes himself as one whose anointment to the throne had been performed by the Imperial lord himself, who was the master of various regions : "Akhila-bhuvana-mandalaika-svamina parama-svamina svayam upahita-rajyabhisekah". This shows that the Maitrakas attained the high position through peaceful means and by the consent of their Imperial lord, whom they owed their allegiance.

WHO COULD BE THE IMPERIAL LORD ? The earliest date of Dronasimha is 183 (A.D. 502) i.e., the beginning of the 6th cent. At the close of the 5th and beginning of the 6th cent., the honour of being described as an Imperial lord (i.e. power) can be shared by three different families,

(1) Guptas : Vainyagupta, Maharajadhiraja (A.D. 507).

(2) Hunas : In 510 Guptas lost Malava, when Toramana established himself in Malava (according to Eran Boar Inscription).

(3) Yasodharman : He conquered Varman kings in A.D. 532 and became a 'samrat'. He might have risen to power near about A.D. 502.

EXAMINATION OF THE ABOVE : (2) Hunas : In the territories which passed into the hands of the Hunas, the use of GE was given up, as the Eran St. Pil. Ins. of Matrvisnu and Dhanyavisnu ia dated in GE 165 (Budhagupta's reign), but (a) another Eran St. Boar Insc. of Dhanyavisnu in the time of Hunas is not dated in GE, but in the Regnal Year of Toramana (b) Gwalior Insc. of Mihirakula bears the Reganal Year of Mihirakula. It may, therefore, be inferred that in the territories of the Hunas, the use of GE was discarded.

On the other hand, the Maitraka grants are dated in GE. It is, therefore, clear that the authority of the Hunas had not penetrated Saurastra at that time.

(3) Yasodharman : (i) In his time the Guptas and Hunas had disappeared. They are assigned to the past. (ii) Guptas were contesting a claim to the suzerainty of North India at least up to A.D. 510. Bhanugupta fought a battle at Eran in 510, most probably with the Hunas. Yasodharman must be subsequent to A.D. 510. He might have started his

career earlier as a ruler of Dasapura, but he could not have established himself as an Imperial ruler before A.D. 510. (iii) Toramana captured Eran (Malava) in A.D. 510. One year for Toramana and 15 years for Mihirakula : the Hunas must have, therefore, been in power in N. India up to A.D. 526. And the suzerainty of Yasodharman must be after that date, whereas the date of Dronasimha is A.D. 502.

THEREFORE, (1) it would have been a Gupta ruler who performed the 'rajyabhiseka' of Dronasimha in A.D. 502. In all likelihood he was Vainyagupta, because his record bears the date A.D. 507 and the date of his predecessor Budhagupta is A.D. 495.

Hence the Maitrakas attained to power, not by rebellion, but by peaceful methods. They gradually strengthened their authority in Surastra.

CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH MAITRAKAS CAME TO BE ESTABLISHED :

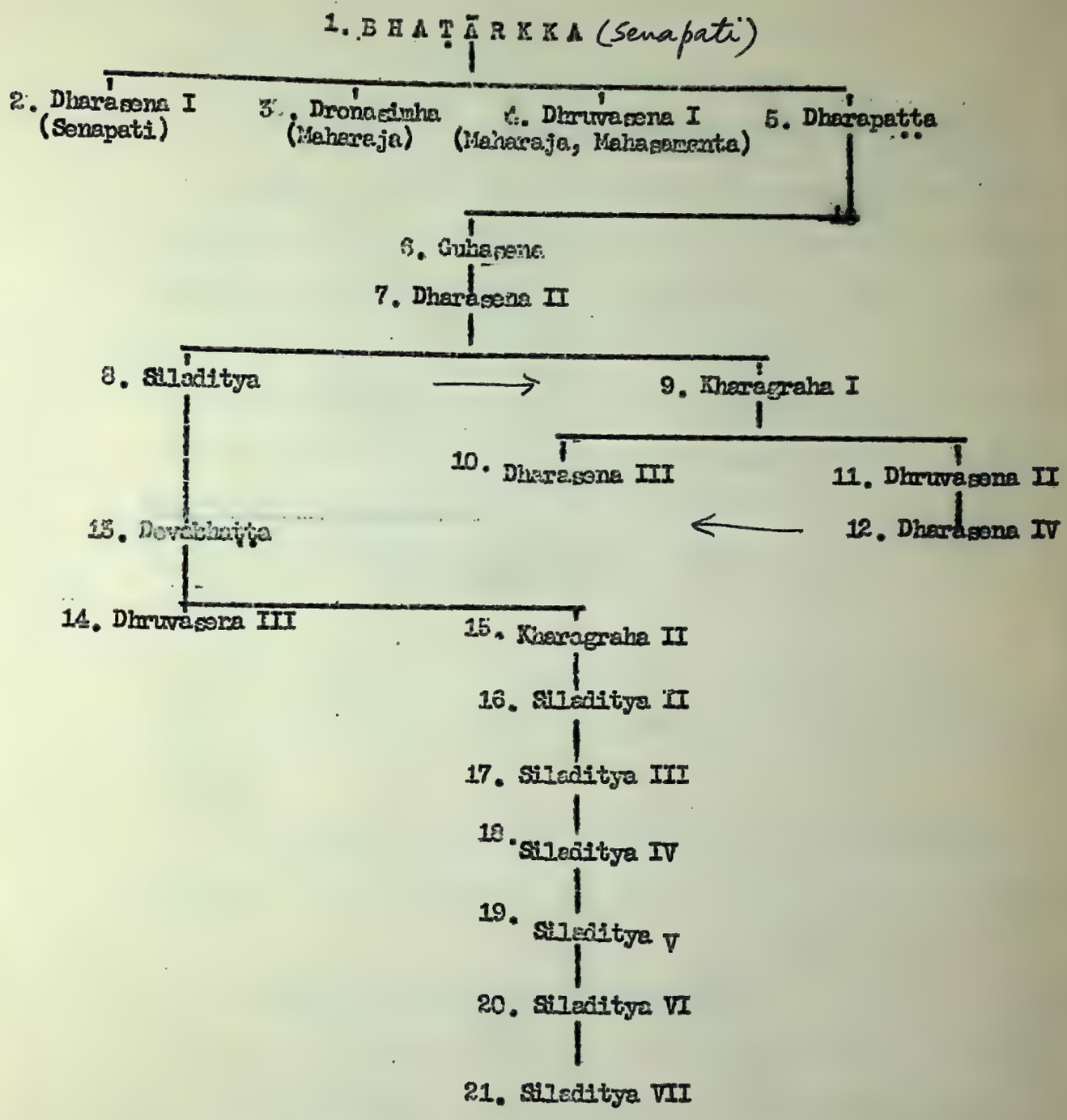
(1) In Jun. R. Ins. Skandagupta is described as having fought with the Mlecchas, who were certainly Hunas as is indicated by his Bhiteri St. Pil. Ins. (2) He is further described there as being very anxious to select a Governor, competent to manage Surastra, and prevent the possible repetition of a foreign invasion. Like Sakas, the invader must have come from Persia, Sistan, through Bolan Pass to Western India. Sk.G. was therefore taking precautionary measures by searching for a capable officers for civil and military administration.

Parnadatta was appointed as the Governor of Surastra to look after the civil administration and we may conjecture that the defence forces were under the charge of Senapati Bhatarkka. In ~~him~~ course of time, Guptas, being pleased with Bhatarkka, invested him with both civil and military administration. These offices were hereditary in those days. By the time of the third generation (Dronasimha), Gupta Emperor felt that these faithful officers should be consecrated formally.

So by this wise step he tried to win their good will, because at that time the position of the Guptas was weakening. Under these circumstances, the Maitrakas were made the tutelary rulers of Valabhi.

The Maitrakas started first as generals (senapati), then Governors, and in course of time they became feudatory rulers.

GENEALOGY OF MAITRAKAS OF VALABHI



HUNAS

1. The first Huna invasion was repulsed by Skandagupta.

2. Indications of a second Huna invasion are found in :-

(a) "Nājnā Hunādhipānām kṣitipati-mukuṭādhyāsinī yān pravistā"
(MSPI of Yasodharman)

Comparison of the extent of Yasodharman's empire with that of the Hunas and the inclusion of the territories formerly held by the Hunas, could only be possible if Hunas had invaded India a second time , penetrated and conquered at least the N.W. part of India.

(b) In Harsa-carita, Bana says :- "Atha kadacit raja Rajya-vardhano Hunan hantum uttarapatham prahinot". This proves the presence of the Hunas in N.W. Panjab and Kashmir, east of Indus. Uttarapatha is the country beyond 'Prthudaka' (modern Pehowa in Karnal Dist.) according to Rajasekhara.

(c) From several other passages in the Harsa-carita, it can be gathered that the country where Bana locates the Hunas, is to the east of Indus.

(d) Niti-vakyamrta of Somadeva states that the Hunas captured Citrakuta, which may be either the modern Citrakuta or modern Cittaura.

NATIONALITY OF TORAMANA AND MIHIRAKULA

(a). No express statement about the nationality of Toramana ani Mihirakula is found either in their records or even in the Mandasor insc. of Yasodharman. In Yasodharman's insc. the Hunas are referred to as a 'bygone power' of the past, while Mihirakula is stated to have been the contemporary of Yasodharman. Therefore, Mihirakula was not a Huna.

BUT : we may take into consideration the fact that although Mihirakula, the Huna ruler, was a contemporary of Yasodharman, the Hunas in general have been referred to in the past, because they were no longer powerful rulers. They were reduced to the position of Samantas (like the Marathas) and therefore they have been spoken as a bygone power, although Mihirakula, a Huna king, was ruling under Yasodharman. If the Hunas were to be taken as belonging to the remote past, then the comparison made in the inscription would have no force. In that case, it would have been much better to draw the comparison with the remote Mauryas, whose Empire was certainly very extensive.

(b) The title 'Maharajadhiraja-sri-Toramana' in the Mandasor insc. does not make him an Indian king, because this mode of address is applied to other kings of definitely foreign origin, e.g., 'Mahārājādhiraja-sri-Vim ...'

(c) The title 'Sahi' and 'Jaubla' are used by Toramana, which show that he was neither a Parthian nor a Saka. Excepting the kings of Kaniska-group, no Saka or Parthian ruler of India used the title of 'Sahi'. And the title of 'Jaubla' was never used by Kaniska-group even.

(d) The successors of the Imperial Kusana rulers in N.W. Panjab and Kabul valley continued the title of 'Sahi'. Toramana, after conquering them, adopted the title 'Sahi' from his predecessors.

(e) Unlike Mihirakula, Toramana does not mention the name of his father, which is contrary to the Indian practice. Therefore, he may be taken as the first ruler of his clan and who established himself in India.

(f) The name of Toramana is neither Sanskrit nor Prakrit, but is decidedly foreign. As it took time for foreigners to adopt Indian names, they retained their original names in the first generation.

(g) Toramana's identification with Kalki s/o Sisupala, as suggested by an Indologist, cannot be accepted, as there are several discrepancies in the theory., e.g., (i) The name of Kalki's son is Ajita, while Toramana's son was Mihirakula. There is no evidence to prove that Ajita was the second name of Mihirakula. (ii) According to Jaina accounts Kalki ruled over Magadha, while it cannot be shown that Toramana ever ruled beyond N.W. India and some parts of Central India, or had any connection with Sisupala of the inscription. (iii) The characters of the insc. belong to Kusana period. Therefore Sisupala belongs tp pre-Gupta period. (iv) 'Sisupalah parthivanika-palah' . Toramana was not a Parthian, because he was not Sisupala ; nor was he a ksatriya, because he was not an Indian. (v)

(h) Some coins ascribed to Hepthalite kings bear the legend which is a counterpart of 'Shaha-Jauvla' of the Kura insc. The use of this title by Toramana shows that he was a Huna.

Like so many other foreign tribes like Sakas, Parthians, Kusanas, etc., the Hunas also became entirely Indianised. They adopted Indian culture, Indian religion, and Indian language. Under the vital influ-

ence of Indian culture they lost their barbaric character and became thoroughly Indianised. During their rule donations were made to Buddhist monasteries and temples.

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ORIGIN OF THE HUNAS

The Hunas were known to the Chinese writers from c. 4th or 5th cent. B.C. A section of the great Yui Chi tribe of N.W. China was known as Hoa-tun, in Europe as Epthalites, to Persian and Arabic writers as Haitul. From their original home in north of China, Mongolia, they came to Khotan and spread over Oxus. One wave went to Europe and seized the Roman Empire under their leader Atilla. Another branch attacked Persia. The warfare lasting for over a century, they defeated at last the Sassanian king Peroz in 484 A.D. Meanwhile they came to India through the Bolan Pass and attacked Surastra, as can be inferred from the Jun. R. Insc. of Sk.G. and his Bhitari Pil. Insc. In this war the Hunas were defeated and they retired from the Indian border. But their success over Peroz in 484, placed them in a very advantageous position and they attacked India for the second time. They consolidated their position, changed their line of advance --- Kabul, N.W.F.P. and Panjab. They did not advance towards the Ganga-plain, but went to C.I. region of Eran (Malava). As Toramana is described without any predecessor, he may be taken as the first ruler. In Eran, Budhagupta was the ruler according to his Eran Insc. of 484. His rule continued up to 495. After 16 years, in 510, we hear of a battle fought at Eran in which the Gupta officer was killed. This war must have been between the Guptas and the Hunas. This would indicate that the Hunas had conquered Panjab, etc., some years earlier.

RECORDS : (i) Toramana's record : Eran Boar Insc. of Regnal Year 1.
(ii) Mihirakula's record : Gwalior Insc. Regnal Year 15.

Just as Attila in Europe, so in India Mihirakula is attributed with cruelties in the Buddhist circle. Yuan Chwang narrates the cruelties and calls him a blood-thirsty tyrant and persecutor of the Buddhists.

During Toramana's reign a Varaha-temple at Eran was built. During Mihirakula's reign a Sun-temple at Gwalior. They themselves were Saiva, worshippers of Sthanu (Mand. Insc. Of YD). The rule of Mihirakula most probably came to an end in 532 when YD claims to have defeated MK;

YASODHARMAN

RECORDS : 1. Mandasor Stone Slab Inscription of Yasodharman alias Vismuvardhana, ME 589 (A.D. 532).

2. Mandasor Stone Pillar Inscription of Yasodharman, undated.

PROBLEM OF IDENTITY : In Mand. St. Sl. Insc. the name Yasodharman is mentioned first and after it comes Vismuvardhana. According to the general epigraphic practice, the name of the Imperial ruler is mentioned first and that of his feudatory after it. But here the person bearing the first name is described simply as 'janendra', while the next person is styled as 'rajadhiraja-paramesvara'. On the other hand, the Pillar Ins. styles Yasodharman as 'samrat'. Consequently, there can be two views : (a) Yasodharman is a suzerain ruler, and Vismuvardhana a feudatory, or (b) vice versa.

BASAK's VIEW : At the time of the Slab Insc. YD was a feudatory. He attained suzerain position later on when he had conquered many regions. Hence he is styled as 'samrat' in the Pillar Inscription.

As YD fought many successful wars on behalf of his suzerain V.V., he is given the first place in the record (i.e. Slab Insc.).

BASAK's VIEW REFUTED : YD might have fought several successful battles for his suzerain, the priority of his name cannot be justified on that account. It is contrary to the usual practice. Moreover, there is no place for V.V. in political India in the later part of the 5th cent. or the first part of the 6th, because in the latter part of the 5th Budhagupta was ruling there (Eran Pil. Ins.) from 484 to 510. Bhanugupta ruled over Malava in 510 (Eran St. Pil. Ins.). After that Toramana appears to be the master of that region, and then Mihirakula succeeded him. YD then defeated Mihirakula. So there is an uninterrupted succession of these rulers in Malava : BG 484 - BhG 510 - Tor. c. 512 - MihK. c. 528 - YD 532.

Therefore the view of Basak that YD of the Slab Ins. was a feudatory of V.V., the suzerain ruler, is not tenable.

ALLAN's VIEW : YD was the suzerain ruler and V.V. his feudatory. 'janendra' is not necessarily a small ruler, and like 'narendra' denotes an imperial ruler. YD, therefore, is the suzerain and given the first place in the Mandasor Stone Slab Inscription.

ALLAN's VIEW REFUTED : The title 'rajadhiraja-paramesvara' given to V.V. contradicts this supposition.

CONCLUSION : None of them is a feudatory of the other, but both the names belong to the same person, i.e. YD & V.V. are identical. This view gets confirmation (a) from the expression : "Sri-Visnuvarddhana-naradhipatih sa eva." 'sa eva' refers to the preceding verse, or even to the preceding name Yd. (b) The M.S.Pil.Ins. describes the assumption of the title 'samrat' by YD in the same manner as that of 'rajadhiraja-paramesvara' by V.V. in the Slab Insc. So samrat YD of Pillar Ins., janendra YD and rajadhiraja V.V. of Slab Insc. are one and the same person.

(c) Moreover, the territories ruled by YD described in the Pillar Ins. are the same as those of V.V. described in the Slab Insc. : Himalaya (N) -- Vindhya Mountain (S) -- Western ocean (W) -- Brahmaputra (E).

(d) Abhayadatta is mentioned in the Slab Insc. as a feudatory of YD-V.V. We, therefore, need not make either of YD and V.V. as a feudatory. The only conclusion is that they are identical.

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PERSONAL HISTORY OF YASODHARMAN

LINEAGE : Some hold him to be the founder of the line or dynasty family. "Prakhyata aulikara-lanchana atma-vamso yenoditodita-padam gamito gariyah" (M.St.Sl.). Misinterpreting the expression 'atma-vamsah' , they conclude that the dynasty began with him. But the real meaning is 'By whom his own family was raised to higher and higher position.'

YD is described here as having 'Aulikara' (the Sun or Moon) as his Coat of Arms. The word 'Aulikara-lanchana' is applied also to king Naravarman in the line of the kings of Dasapura. The lineage of the Dasapura can be constructed from their inscriptions :-

1. Jaya-varman
2. (son) Simhavarman } Mand. Stone Insc. of NV, A.D. 404
3. (son) Nara-varman }
4. (son) Visva-varman } Gangdhar Stone Insc. of V.V., 423 A.D.
5. (son) Bandhu-varman } Mand. St. Insc. of Bandhuvarman, 436 A.D.
6. Yasodharman (V.V.), Mandasor St. Slab Insc. of YD, 532 A.D.

They are generally called Varmans of Dasapura.

Visva-varman and Bandhu-varman are feudatories of Gupta Emperor Kr I.

(Mandasor Stone Insc. of BV and KG I, A.D. 436): "Kumaragupte prthivim prasasati ... ... babhurva gopta nrpa-Visvavarma." (verse 24). But after them, YD became the sovereign ruler, with the decline of the Gupta Empire. Hunas occupied Malava, defeating the Guptas. Yasodharman repulsed the Hunas and became the suzerain ruler of Malava. In this task of expanding his empire, he appears to have come in clash with Guptas also.

ACHIEVEMENTS : His achievements are enumerated in his Mandasor Insc., A.D. 532 : "Praco nrpan subrhatas ca bahun udicah, Samma yudha ca vasa-gan pravidhaya yena, Etc". (v. 7) -- subdued many great kings of east and north, through statesmanship and valour, etc. He defeated Mihirakula also, who paid homage to the feet of YD : "Mihirakula-nrpena-rcita-pada-yugmam" (M. Pil. Ins.). YD conquered countries which even the Guptas and the Hunas could not ever conquer: "Ye bhukta Gupta-nathair na sakala-vasudha-kranti-drsta-pratapaih, Najna Hunadhipanam ksiti-pati-mukutadhyasini yen pravista." (v. 4, Pil. Ins.).

ADMINISTRATION : Malava and western India were placed under the Governor-ship of Dharmadosa, and after him, under Daksa (Nirdosa) (M. Slab Ins.).

DATE : Hastivarman of Parivrajaka family in his Majhagawam Plate, GE 191 (A.D. 510), and Samksobha, his son in his Khoh Cop.-pl, GE 209 (A.D.528) recognise Gupta overlordship : "Gupta-nrpa-rajya-bhuktau". YD's date in M. St. Sl. Insc. is A.D. 532. YD's statement of victories is either boastful, or his victories are posterior to A.D. 528. But his statement is neither boastful nor due to poetical exaggeration, it is a historical statement giving specific names of territories conquered. Therefore, his victories must have been posterior to A.D. 528, i.e., between 528 (Samksobha's last date) and 532 (YD's own statement in his inscription).

VIKRAMADITYA : Because of his victory over the Hunas, some scholars hold him as the legendary Vikramaditya, but this title was already used by several Gupta kings. No coin of YD bearing this title has been found.

DECLINE : With Yd the line comes to an end. The Maukharis might have been the cause of his family's end.

EXTENT : From Himalaya in the north to Mahendragiri in the south, and, from Brahmaputra river in the east to the western ocean in the west.

HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF APHASAD INSCRIPTION OF ADITYASENA

This inscription reveals to us a line of kings believed to be an offshoot of the Imperial Guptas, and now called Later Guptas of Magadha by historians and archaeologists.

Adityasena, whose inscription it is, probably ruled in Magadha or some country near it, as this insc. along with others was found there. The genealogy given in it is as follows : 1. Krsnagupta, 2. Harsagupta, 3. Jivitagupta I, 4. Kumaragupta (who fought with Isanavarman, probably a Maukhari king) 5. Damodaragupta (who also fought with the Maukharis), 6. Mahasenagupta (who fought with Susthitavarman), 7. Madhavagupta (who had probably some relation with Harsa of Kanauj : "Sri-Harsadeva-nija-samgama-vanchayatra". 8. Adityasena (the inscriber, and his queen).

But unfortunately, the inscription is silent about the territorial limits of the kingdom of these rulers. Besides the history of Adityasena, a few important deductions can be drawn from the information contained in it.

WAR WITH THE MAUKHARIS : Firstly, there seems to have been a prolonged int intermittent warfare between the Later Guptas and the Maukharis of Kannauj who probably were thus engaged in contest for supremacy in N. India, and, it appears that the Maukharis were able to hold their own.

HUNAS & MAUKHARIS : Secondly, there is an allusion to the scuffle between the Hunas in the Panjab and Maukharis. Here also the Maukharis kept the Hunas at a respectable distance from Aryavarta proper. In this task they were probably helped by the House of Thanesar.

HARSA OF KANNAUJ & MADHAVAGUPTA : Thirdly, it shows that the 7th king of the Later Gupta line, Madhavagupta, father of Adityasena, was on friendly terms with Harsa. It is suggested that Guptas originally belonged to Malava, and it was Harsa who appoited Madhavagupta as the Governor of Magadha. After the death of Harsa, Adityasena laid the foundation of Gupta Empire there.

SUSTHITAVARMAN : Another important point in the insc. is the identification of Susthitavarman, defeated by Mahasena. While somscholars think that he was a king of Kamarupa, others say that he was a Maukhari, a half brother or younger brother of Sarvavarman. But the latter hypothesis is nothing more than a conjecture to get over the difficulty. The Guptas before Madhavagupta were in possession of Magadha and that Susthita only met the traditional

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treatment at the hands of the Guptas.

HISTORY OF ADITYASENA (A.D. 672)

We have 4 inscriptions of Adityasena, one from Shahpur (Patna Dist.), dated 66 Harsa Era (A.D. 672-73); the other from Aphasad, the present one,; and thirdly, his name is mentioned in the Deo Barnark Insc. of his grandson Jivitagupta II.

Adityasena appears to have been a Prince of remarkable vigour and ability, who found his opportunity in the commotion which followed the break of Harsa's Empire.

In the Mandra Hill (Bhagalpur Dist., Bihar) Insc. A-sena is styled as'parama-bhattaraka-maharajadhiraja'. His father was only a Semanta, which shows that he was responsible for the independence of his family. The position thus acquired by A-sena continued intact through the reigns of his son Devagupta, grandson Visnugupta, and great-grandson Jivitagupta II.

Adityasena was a staunch Vaisnavite, and both he and his queen Konadevi built many a work of charity, e.g., temples, tanks, etc.

Now the question is what really was the extent of his Empire. Of the inscs. that have come down to us, none gives an indication of his territorial limits. But there is a record at Deoghar on a pier in the porch of Vaidyanatha temple (Santhal Parganas, Bengal) in the heart of his territory, which states that he was the ruler of a comparatively extensive empire and that his authority extended as far as Colapura. He is said to have brought vast amount of wealth from the Capital of Cola and with it celebrated the 3rd Asvamedha. He is further said to have constructed a temple of Visnu. But the document appears to be a late copy in Maithili characters of 13th cent. Moreover, it is not found in the place mentioned in it,but from a Saiva temple. However, it appears to be a genuine copy. The change of the name of the queen from Konadevi to Kosadevi is a clerical mistake. We may, therefore, say that he subdued the Cola power, though his influence might not have remained permanent. The general achievements ascribed to him appear to be quite possible, for his records show him to be powerful king (Cf. Fleet, p. 212, fn. 6).

Thus, Adityasena was a sovereign of very great influence in Magadha

and the surrounding territories. His power was great enough for him to put forward a claim to imperial authority without being seriously questioned.

HISTORY OF THE LATER GUPTAS OF MAGADHA KNOWN FROM RECORDS

RECORDS : 1. Stone Inscription from Aphasad (Bihar), of Adityasena.

2. Inscription from Shahpur (Patna Dist.), Bihar.

3. Inscription from Mandar Hill, Bhagalpur Dist., Bihar.

4. Inscription from Deo Barnark, Shahabad Dist., Bihar, of Jivitagupta.

CONTENTS : 1.The Aphsad Insc. records the building of a Vismu temple by AS.

2. Shahpur (Fleet No. 43) records some grant and the installation of an image in the reign of Aditysena.

3. Mandar Hill Insc. records the digging of a tank by the queen Konadevi.

4. Deo Barnark Insc. (Fleet No. 46) gives the continuation of the genealogy of the Guptas of Magadha for three more generations, including the name of Devagupta, which gives the clue to the date of the Vakataka Maharajas. It also records the names of certain previous kings who had confirmed the grant.

The deatails of the geneology as furnished by the Inscs.are :-

1. Krsnagupta	) No specific statement of their achievements.
2. Harsagupta	)
3. Jivitagupta	)
4. Kumaragupta	) Clash with Maukhari king Isanavarman.
5. Damodaragupta	) Clash with Maukhari king Isanavarman (?) or Sarvavarman.
6. Mahasenagupta	) Defeated Susthitavarman.
7. Madhavagupta	) Association with king Harsa of Kannauj.
8. Adityasena.	)

WHY CALLED GUPTAS ? As all the rulers have their names ending in -Gupta, they have been classed as 'Later Guptas', although they have no direct connection with the Imperial Guptas. And as all their inscriptions have been found in Bihar, they have been called the 'Later Guptas of Magadha'.

DID THEY BELONG TO MALAVA ? (1) A wrong study of the Aphsad Insc. gave the impression that these Guptas belonged to Malava.

(2) Bana in his Harsacarita says : "After the death of Prabhakara-varddhana (f/o Rajya- and Harsa-varddhana) of Sthanvisvara, the king of Gauda and the king of Malava attacked Kannauj, the Capital of the Maukharis, killed Grahavarman, son-in-law of Prabhakara-varddhana,

captured his queen. From Sthanvisvara, Rajyavarddhana reached Kannauj for his sister's help, but was killed deceitfully. At that Harsavarddhana hastened from Sthanvisvara to punish the enemies, but the latter fled away. This shows the enmity between the Maukharis of Kannauj and the rulers of Malava and Gauda. Bana mentions only the surname Gupta of the ruler of Malava : "Gupta-nama Malava-rajah". We may, therefore, infer that the ruler of Malava was a Gupta king. According to the statements contained in the Madhuvana and Banskhera Inscs. of Harsa's time, Rajyavarddhana defeated Devagupta. This shows that the name of the Gupta king was Devagupta. The enmity between the Houses of Malava and Kannauj is evident also from the expression "Malava-laksmi-lata-paragu" which Bana uses for Prabhakaravarddhana. Bana also states that Kumaragupta and Madhavagupta, the two sons of the king of Malava, were sent to the Court at Sthanvisvara, where they were assigned the duties of waiting upon the Princes Rajyavarddhana and Harsavarddhana. We also know from Aphsad insc. that Madhavagupta was a friend of Harsavarddhana : "Sri-Harsadeva-nija-samgama-vanchaya ..." Thus both these statements confirm the association of the Malava king Madhavagupta with king Harsa. From this the evident conclusion is that the Later Guptas were the rulers of Malava. But the Later Guptas of Aphsad Insc. did not belong to Malava, because : (a) Mahasena, the 6th ruler of this line, is described in the Aphsad Insc. as having defeated Susthitavarman (probably of Assam) and making his fame to be sung on the banks of Lauhitya (Brahmaputra): "Srimat-Susthitavarma-yuddha-vijaya .... yasyadyapi ..... Lauhityasya- tatesu .... sphitam yaso giyate."

If Madhavagupta belonged to Malava, he could not have attacked Susthitavarman without conquering Magadha first. If he or his predecessor had conquered Magadha, the great achievement must have found mention in the Aphsad Inscription.

(b) If 'Gupta-nama' Malavaraja of Harsacarita, whose name has been suggested as Devagupta by Harsa's Madhuvana and Banskhera plates, was one of the Later Guptas of Aphsad Insc., then his name Devagupta would have occured in the Aphsad insc. But there is no such name in that insc. An answer to this is suggested : that Devagupta was the son of Mahasenagupta, while his two brothers Madhava and Kumara were

sent to Sthanvisvara. After the death of his father Devagupta ascended the throne and allying himself with the ruler of Gauda defeated and killed Grahavarman. Devagupta, in his turn, was killed by Harsa's general Bhandi, and Harsa installed his companion Madhavagupta (brother of Devagupta) of that line on the throne. Therefore Devagupta, not being in direct succession, was not mentioned in the Aphsad insc.

(c) The association and friendly relations of Madhavagupta with Harsa, referred to in the Aphsad Insc., would seem strange, if we take him as belonging to Malava. Harsa would not have made friendly alliance with a person whose brother was responsible for the death of his brother-in-law and widowhood of his sister.

(d) While there is total lack of archaeological evidence in support of the Later guptas as belonging to Malava, the epigraphic evidence, on the other hand, places them towards the east, e.g., (i) All inscriptions of the later Guptas have been found from Bihar, (ii) In an inscription from Damodarpur (East Bengal), 543 A.D., the king's name is damaged, but we can read 'Ku' in the beginning and the ending 'gupta' is clearly legible. So we may restore it to 'Kumaragupta' of the Later Gupta line. Hence the Later Guptas should be placed in East Bengal.

From what has been said above, it becomes evident that beyond the similarity of names, there is no link between the two families mentioned in the Aphsad and Bansdhera inscriptions. Therefore, the line of the Later Guptas given in the Aphsad Insc. definitely belonged to Magadha.

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A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE HISTORY OF THE LATER GUPTAS OF MAGADHA

1. Krsnagupta)
2. Harsagupta) No specific statement about their rule or achievements.
3. Jivitagupta)

4. Kumaragupta — fought with the Maukhari king Isanavarman, who was an ambitious king and wanted to extend his territories. At first the result was in favour of Kumaragupta, but finally, KG was defeated and the Maukhari king held the field. Kumaragupta, perhaps due to the ignominy of defeat, committed suicide at Prayaga as mentioned in the Aphsad inscription.

5. Damodaragupta — After the death of KG, the Maukhari king Īśāna-

varman, or his son Sarvavarman, took the opportunity and became the master of the Ganga-valley after driving away the Later Guptas to further East. Damodaragupta was pressed very hard in the battle, so much so that he fainted in the battle-field on account of his wounds.

6. Mahasenagupta -- Later Guptas, finding the west blocked by the Maukharis, made their way to the east, and there made compensation for their lossses in the west. Mahasenagupta conquered Srimat-Susthita-varman, king of Assam, who belonged to the family of Bhaskaravarman. The fame of Mahasenagupta was sung on the banks of Lauhitya.

7. Madhavagupta -- During the reign of Madhavagupta, the Later Guptas and the Varddhanas appear to be living in peace. There is a clear mention of Madhavagupta's association with Harsa in Aphsad insc. It is most likely, therefore, that the murderer of Grahavarman belonged to a different Line. It is impossible to think of Harsa's friendliness with a family that was responsible for the widowhood of his sister. Madhava was a brave king : "Ajau maya vinihata balino dvisantah".

8. Adityasena --- Also known from his Shahpur Image Insc. HE 66(Epoch 606 A.D., hence 672 A.D.). This was exactly the period when there was chaos in the country, and there was no strong Central power. Harsa had died in A.D. 648, and his empire was broken after his death.

The absence of any rival made the field clear for Adityasena, and he became the master of Ganga-valley. He bore the title 'parama-bhattaraka-maharajadhiraja' and restored the glory of his House.

From a later copy of his inscription from the temple of Vaidyanatha in Bihar, he is said to have led an expedition to Cola country in the south, and by the wealth brought as booty from there, he performed the horse sacrifice. As Aphsad insc. does not mention this exploit, much reliance may not be placed on this copy which was made very late in the 13th cent. in Maithil characters. Fleet regards it as belonging to a period not earlier than the 16th cent. (Corp. In. In. pp. 212-214).fn.

Adityasena and his queen erected a religious shrine and made several donations. His title 'parama-bhattaraka-maharajadhiraja' speaks of him as an imperial monarch and his authority extended over considerable area. He is probably identical with 'Sun Army' (Adityasena) of a Chinese insc. His name was thus famous abroad and he had friendly relations at least with China.

9. Devagupta -- Succeeded Adityasena. Nothing remarkable during his reign.

10. Vismugupta -- son of Devagupta, known from Deo Barnark insc. of his son Jivitagupta. No other special information.

11. Jivitagupta II -- It seems that Later Guptas had restored their

authority over theareas taken away from them by the Maukharis. Jivitagupta succeeded Vismugupta, made a grant of Deva-Varunarka, the Agrahara donated by the Maukharis and now under the sway of the Later Guptas. He is the last monarch of this line.

Assigning 20 years each to two generations after Adityasena, the family comes to an end in 672 + 20 + 40 = 732 A.D., i.e., in the first half of the 8th cent. A.D.

Vakpatiraja wrote 'Gauda-vaha', an expedition of Yasovarman against the king of Magadha and Bengal. We are tempted to regard him as the king of Bihar and Bengal, identical with Jivitagupta II, who met the defeat at the hands of Yasovarman. It is only circumstantial evidence and cannot be regarded as a fact. It is quite likely that Gauda Magadhanatha was someone else than Jivitagupta II.

LATER GUPTAS OF MAGADHA

1. Krsnagupta
2. Harsagupta
3. Jivitagupta I
4. Kumaragupta
5. Damodaragupta
6. Mahasenagupta
7. Madhavagupta
8. Adityasena
9. Devagupta
10. Visnugupta
11. Jivitagupta II

From 1 to 8 the names occur in Aphsad Insc. of Adityasena.

A.D. 672, Shahpur Ins. of Adit.

From 8 to 11 the names occur in Deo Barnark Insc. of Jivitagupta II.

MAUKHARIS OF KANNAUJ (HARAH BRANCH)

The lineage of the Maukharis is construcyed from their inscriptions.

Harah Insc. A.D. 554

- Harivarman (Mahārāja, c. 494 A.D.)
- Ādityavarman (Mahārāja, c. 514 A.D.)
- ĪŚVARAVARMAN (Maharaja, c. 534 A.D.) — (Vide Nos. 48, 49, 50). — Jaunpur Ins. No. 51.
- Īśānavarman (Maharajadhiraja, 554 A.D.) — Harah Insc. of SV.
  - Suryavarman (did not rule)
  - Sarvavarman (Maharajadhiraja, Parama-mahesvara) — Asirgarh Seal No. 47.
    - Ksatravarman (?) — mentioned by Bana.

Nalanda Clay Seal

- Avantivarman (Paramesvara) — (Vide No. 46) mentioned by Bana as father of Graha-var.
- Grahavarman (c. 600-605 A.D.)

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MAUKHARIS (GAYA BRANCH)

- Yajnavarman (nrpa)
- Sardula(-varman, nrpa)
- Anantavarman — (Vide Nos. 48, 49, 50).

THE MAUKHARIS

ANTIQUITY OF THE FAMILY : There were several dynasties which bore the name of Maukharis.

1. Gaya Clay Sealing, discovered by General Cunningham, bears the name 'Maukhalinan' in Prakrit written in earlier Brahmi script, which carries the family back to 2nd cent. B.C.

2. Sacrificial pillars (yupas) belonging to 2nd cent. A.D., bearing Maukhari inscriptions, prove their existence in the 2nd cent. A.D.

3. In Harah insc. Maukharis are connected with the Panjab and the descendents of the hundred sons of Asvapati : "Yah suta-satam lebhe Vivasvatah, tat-prasutah ...."

4. According to Bonn, Maukharis were Ksatriyas.

The family name may have been derived from Mukhara, who may have been their ancestor. Their history in the 2nd cent. B.C. is not known. The first reference as 'Senapatis' occurs in the sacrificial 'yupas' of 2nd cent. A.D. Most probably they held important posts in administration and were not the rulers, because neither titles like 'Maharaja' etc., nor reference to any territory is found in the Harah insc. The first historical monarch was Harivarman.

CIRCUMSTANCES : After Budhagupta (476-496 A.D.), Gupta Empire was on its sharp downfall at the close of the 5th cent. A.D. The first three rulers of the Maukhari dynasty are styled only as 'Maharaja', which shows that most probably they had become the feudatories of the Guptas. It was the 4th ruler, Isanavarman, who had become 'Maharajadhiraja' in A.D. 554. Maukharis had to fight very hard to achieve that dignity and style, viz., 'Maharajadhiraja'.

PERSONAL HISTORY : 1. Harivarman : He was only a 'Maharaja'.

2. Adityavarman : Son and successor of Harivarman, only a 'Maharaja' without any achievements. He ruled over the ancestral kingdom. His relations with the later Guptas were cordial. He married Harsagupta, the daughter of Krsnagupta, who was his chief queen.

3. Isvaravarman : Son and successor of Adityavarman, only a 'Maharaja'. An insc. from Jaunpur (No. 51) speaks of certain victories over (i) Vindhya mountain, (ii) region of Dhara, and (iii) lord of Andhra. But the lacunae following line 5 are so extensive that it is impossible to say whether the historical information given in them refers to Isvaravarman, or to one of his descendents. Harah insc. does not refer to any victory of Isvaravarman. Moreover, his title of 'Maharaja' too indicates a subordinate status.

4. Isanavarman : His date is known from Harah Insc. as 554 A.D. He became a 'Maharajadhiraja' after a severe struggle. He came in conflict with the later Guptas and was engaged in war with

Kumaragupta. At first Isanavarman was defeated, but afterwards he was successful. KG committed suicide at Prayaga. After his death, Maukharis drove the Later Guptas out of Magadha, who fled and took shelter on the sea shore : "kṛtvā Guptān samudrāśrayān".

Though the Guptas had retired to East Bengal, they were hotly pursued by Isanavarman. Damodaragupta, son of KG, was pressed very hard in the battle, so much so that he fainted from his wounds in the battle-field.

Victories over Vindhya, Dhara and Andhra, mentioned in the Jaunpur insc. (No. 51) are, in all probability, to be attributed to him. This is corroborated by references in other sources in which Mulikas, the people of Vindhya region, are said to be conquered by him.

5. Suryavarman : He is mentioned as the son of Isanavarman in Harah insc., but in other records Sarvvavarman is said to be the son and successor of Isanavarman. From this two conclusions can be drawn, viz., either Suryavarman was not the elder son, or if he was the elder, he must have died during his father's time, and Sarvavarman succeeded.

6. Sarvvavarman : Son of Isanavarman, he was styled as 'Maharaja-dhiraja', indicating his imperial status. His copper Seal was found at Asirgarh, but that does not prove that his territory extended up to that place. It was found among certain other documents belonging to Maharaja Sindhia. Deo Barnark insc. (No. 46) of Jivitagupta II mentions his name. It is difficult to say whether the Maukhari ruler against whom Damodaragupta fought was Sarvavarman or his father Isanavarman.

7. Ksatravarman : Bana makes mention of another Maukhari king, Ksatravarman, who was killed by his bard. Katre suggested that Ksatravarman belonged to this family, and may be placed between Sarvavarman and Avantivarman. But the suggestion is not acceptable, because :

(i) Mere mention of Ksatravarman as Maukhari by Bana, does not prove that he belonged to this line, as there were several other branches of this family. (ii) Bana speaks highly of the Maukharis of Kannauj and mentions Avantivarman in complimentary terms, while he calls Ksatravarman a fool. It is unbelievable that Bana should call the father of Avantivarman, for whom he shows regard, a fool. (iii) Moreover, Ksatravarman is said to have died as a result of a successful plot of his enemies. Had he belonged to this branch of the family, the line would have come to an end. But we find Avantivarman continuing to rule in the family. (iv) There are only 50 years between Isanavarman (A.D. 554) and and Grahavarman (A.D. 604) for 4 rulers, i.e. Isana (554-560), Sarva (560-580), Avanti (580-600), Graha (600-605). Hence there is a real difficulty in assigning any time to his rule. (v) Nalanda Clay Seal presents Avantivarman as son and immediate successor of Sarvavarman.

In view of the above, no place can be given to Ksatravarman in Maukhari genealogy. If he did belong to the family, the most we can say about him is that he might have come to grief as a result of court intrigue.

8. Avantivarman : He was the son and successor of Sarvavarman. Bana eulogizes him as 'tilaka-bhutasya'. He fought with the Hunas side by side with the Vardhanas of Thanesar. This gave lead to the view that he was the patron of the poet Visakhadatta, the author of Mudra-ra.

9. Grahavarman : The son and successor of Avantivarman, he was the last Maukhari monarch. He is mentioned by Bana, and in Nalanda Clay Seal. He married Rajyasri, the daughter of Prabhakaravardhana of Thanesar. It appears that the Later Guptas did not forget their blood-feud with the Maukharis. After the death of Avantivarman (Maukhari of Kannauj) and Prabhakaravardhana (Thanesar), the Later Guptas of Gauda, and and Malava joined hands, and made a surprise attack on Kannauj. They seized Kannauj, captured and murdered Grahavarman, and made Rajyasri a captive. Rajyavardhana came from Thanesar to help, but was killed deceitfully. Then Harsa marched towards Kannauj against the Guptas of Malava and Gaudas who fled away before him. Bhandi, Harsa's general finished the Malava ruler. Thus the Maukhari house came to an end on account of the murder of Grahavarman. King Harsa transferred his capital from Sthanvisvara to Kanyakubja, and became the master of Ganga-valley (A.D. 606).

DATES : Isanavarman's date is known from Barah insc. as 554 A.D. Harivarman, the orininator of the family, was in the third generation before him. Assigning 20 years to each we got 554 - 60 = 494 A.D. as the period of commencement of Harivarman's rule.

Harsa came to the throne at Kanyakubja in 606 A.D.. So Grahavarman might have died in A.D. 604, which gives the date of the end of the Maukhari House.

CAPITAL : According to Bana, Kanyakubja was the capital of Avanti-varman and Grahavarman. We know nothing about the Capital of the earlier Maukharis. Their inscriptions are found scattered over a vast territory of Uttara-pradesa, Shahabad Distt. of Western Magadha.

MAUKHARIS (GAYA BRANCH)

SOURCE : Inscriptions from Barabar Hill Cave and Nagarjuni Hill Cave Nos. 48, 49, 50.

NAMES : The king (nrpa) Yajnavarman, his son, the king Sardula(-varman), and his son Anantavarman.

No relation is mentioned with the Maukharis of Harah branch. No title of Maharajadhiraja and no detailed history either on epigraphs or in literature. Originally they were officers under the Guptas. With the decline of the Guptas, they became feudatories.

2. Sardula(-varman) : He is described as 'Samanta-cudamani', i.e., Chief of the Feudatory Rulers, because of his exceptional valour and military strength. He was a terror to his foes ('Kalah sattru-mahibhujam), but charmed the thoughts of lovely women (kanta-citta-harah) on account of his Cupid-like beauty (Smara-pratisamah). No. 48.

1. Yajnavarman : He is described as famous by the performance of copious sacrifices. Though he was the foremost of all kings (rajakasyagranih), yet he did not make any effort to establish an empire. He remained calm and unperturbed like an ocean (prakrtistha eva vinayad aksobhya-sattvadadhih) . No. 50

3. Anantavarman : He installed several images of deities in the caves of Barabar Hill, made the grant of a village to the Durga temple, installed the image of Bhutapati (Siva) and Devi (Parvati) of the kind called Ardha-nirisvara in a rock-cut chamber (guha).

All the three kings are said to have performed Vedic rites.

VAKATAKAS OF VIDARBHA (Berar)

SOURCE : Vakatakas are not mentioned in literature, nor in the genealogies of the Puranas. The only source of their name and history is their inscriptions on stone and copper-plates discovered from Berar (C.P.).

ORIGIN OF THE NAME : The name Vakataka is certainly derived from the name of a place, like the names Kanceyaka, Mahakantaraka, etc. The founder of the family must have been a person who hailed from or was connected with some place called 'Vakata', 'Vakata', 'Bagat' or 'Bagata'.

THEORIES ABOUT THE PLACE : (a) Dr. Jayaswal : identified it with a village 'Bagata' in Orccha State near Jhansi (C.I.), the link between this village and the dynasty being the 'Gotra' Visnuvrddha of the Brahmanas inhabiting it, which was the same as that of the Vakatakas. He tried to support this view from some coin said to have been found at Kosam, near Allahabad and supposed to be issued by Pravarasena I. But no coins were issued by the Vakatakas at all.

(b) Dr. Altekar : An inscription from Amravati in Andhra makes mention of a Vakataka pilgrim. Hence Vakatakas must also be people of the south. This view is supported by the fact that Vakataka inscriptions are found to the south of Narmada. No document has been found in the north. They themselves speak of their southern character. Thus epigraphic evidence is more reliable. Mere community of Gotra of the Brahmanas inhabiting the Bagata village is not conclusive evidence.

BELONGED TO THE SOUTH : There is no valid argument to support the theory that the Vakatakas were originally a northern dynasty. On the other hand, there are several indications to prove that they belonged to the south.

(i) Several expressions in their Sanskrit and Prakrit inscriptions bear striking similarities to those used in Pallava grants.

(ii) Like the Satakarnis, Kadambas and Chalukyas of the south, the early Vakatakas of the south called themselves 'Haritaputras'.

(iii) Like Pallavas and Kadambas (the southern dynasties), they assumed the title of 'Dharma maharaja'.

CAPITALS : Of Vindhya-sakti, the Capital was Canaka, probably their original Capital. Puranas mention Canaka, but it is not yet identified. It may be in Kanarese country, Chamagiri.

Of Pravarasena I, the Capital was Purika, which was previously the Capital of the Nagas. It may have become the Capital of the Vakatakas after their advent into the province. It was situated somewhere in the Satapura mountains (Harivamsa Purana).

Of Rudrasena I (Main Branch), the Capital was Purika, and of Sarvasena it was Vatsagulma (Basim).

Prthivisena I (Main Branch) Nandivardhana.

WERE THEY YAVANAS ? Owing to the corrupt reading of a passage in the Purana and partly due to its misconstruction, the Vakatakas were believed to be Yavanas. But the prevailing view, on the other hand, is that they were Brahmanas.

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BRANCHES OR DIFFERENT GENEALOGIES

FROM COPPER-PLATES : From Chammak plates of Pravarasena II —
and Balaghat Insc. of Prthivisena II —

(A)

1. Samrat Pravarasena I
2. Gautamiputra (son) — did not rule.
3. Rudrasena (Son)
4. Prthivisena I (son)
5. Rudrasena II (son)
6. Pravarasena II (son)
7. Narendrasena (son)
8. Prthivisena II (son)

(B) From Basim Plates :-

1. Vindhya-sakti I
2. Pravarasena (son)
3. Sarvasena (son)
4. Vindhya-sakti II

FROM STONE WALL INSCRIPTIONS : Two inscriptions at Ajanta and Gulsera, engraved on the stone wall of a rock-cut temple, give another genealogy.

1. ~~Vindhya-sakti~~

(C)

1. Vindhya-sakti
2. Pravarasena
3. [*Rudra]sena
4. [*Prthivisena] (doubtful reading)
5. Pravarasena II
6. Minor son of 8 years (astabdakah), name lost).
7. Devasena
8. Harisena

RECONCILIATION : Prof. Miraghi tackled the problem of reconciliation of these different genealogies given in (B) and (C) above:-

(a) The first part, viz., 'Rudra' is damaged and practically has to be supplied. Prof. Miraghi has restored it to Sarva, and read it as Sarvasena instead of Rudrasena. This reading gets confirmation from the fact, that the author of the Ajanta Cave Insc. was fond of alliteration, e.g., "nirvapano....pranamya purva . pravakaye kaitipamupurvye" and "Pravrddhasali Danasaktih Vindhya-saktih". So, in the line under question the reading Sarva is harmonious with alliteration : "Pravarasenasya jita-sarva-senah [Sarva]senah suto 'bhavat."

(b) In line 7, the first and the last two letters of the name are missing. Miraghi restores the name to '[Vi]ndhya[sakti]' or '[Vi]ndhya[sena]'. In this way Prof. Miraghi holds these two genealogies identical and gives the following reconciled genealogy of (B) and (C).

1. Vindhya-sakti I
2. Pravarasena I
3. Sarvasena
4. Vindhya-sakti II
5. Pravarasena II
6. Minor son of 8 years
7. Devasena
8. Harisena

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GENEALOGY OF THE VAKATAKAS

1. Vindhya-sakti I (c. 260-270 A.D.)

2. Pravarasena I (c. 270-330 A.D.) — (Basim Plate)

Gautamiputra (did not rule) w. d/o Bhavanaga, king of Bharasivas

Sarvasena

Vindhya-sakti II

3. Rudrasena I (c. 330-345)

Pravarasena II

4. Prthivisena I (c. 345-400)

Minor son (Astabdakah)

Devasena

5. Rudrasena II (c. ? A.D.) (w. Prabhavatigupta d/o CG II)

Harisena

6. Pravarasena III) (c. 420-450)

7. Narendrasena (c. 450-465)

8. Prthivisena II

Chammak Cop.-Plates of Pravarasena II

Ajanta insc.

Cave XVI

Balaghat ins. of Pr. II (C+F)

HISTORY OF THE VAKATAKAS

1. VINDHYASAKTI : 'Dolja' (= dvija) in Ajanta, founder of the dynasty. That he was a ruler is known from Ajanta Cave XVI insc. He was great warrior (kruddha-purair api anivarya-viryah). He carved out a small kingdom by his personal efforts. Third cent. A.D. was a period of great confusion all over India. In the north the great empire of the Kusanas was crumbling down. There was no strong central power to check ambitious war lords from accumulating strength. In the south, Satavahana dynasty was on the verge of collapse. In such a period it was very easy for adventurous men to try their fortune and build up their power. According to Ajanta insc., he had a large cavalry, he conquered a large part of Kuntala and Vidarbha from the Satavahanas, and ruled from his original Capital from c. 250 to c. 270.

2. PRAVARASENA I : He sought to strengthen his position by means of a matrimonial alliance with the Bharasivas. His son, Gautamiputra, married the daughter of Maharaja Bhavanaga. In Purana he is called 'pravira', a brave monarch. He extended his empire by conquests and performed an Asvamedha rite to celebrate his victories. From the later history of the dynasty and later division of the empire, it can be gathered that he was the master of the whole of C.P. and Berar. He was the real founder of the Vakataka kingdom and may have ruled from 270 to 330 A.D. He extended his empire northwards as far as Narmada, and shifted his Capital to Purika after defeating the Naga ruler.

3. RUDRASENA I : He was the grand-son of Pravarasena I and son of Gautamiputra deceased. An important statement about him is that he is described as the daughter's son of Bhavanaga of Bharasiva Naga family. Mention of Bharasivas in Vakataka records shows that they were of great service to the Vakataka ruler Pravarasena I. We may conjecture that because of the young age of Rudrasena I, his uncle Sarvasena might have attempted to take possession of the entire domain, but Rudrasena's mothers relatives, the Bharasivas did not permit the right of their daughter's son to be so easily trampled over.

Though Bharasivas' intervention, Rudrasena I, the elder son of Pravarasena I, got the major share of the empire. This Rudrasena did not come into clash with Samudragupta (as identified by some with Rudradeva

of Allahabad Pillar Insc., on the plea that Rudrasena is styled merely as Maharaja, while his grand-father Pravarasena bore the title 'Samrat'). Against this identification it may be urged :-

(i) Vakatakas were a great and powerful dynasty. If they had been subdued, the fact would have been mentioned clearly in the All. Pil. Ins.

(ii) Rudradeva of A.P.I. belongs to Aryavarta, while the Vakatakas belong to the south (Daksina).

(iii) Rudradeva of A.P.I. was violently exterminated (prasabhoddhrta) and his House came to an end, while the dynasty of Rudrasena continued to flourish after him.

(iv) The possibility of a confederacy of rebellions is absent.

(v) Prthivisena I, the son of Rudrasena I, is described as "Mahesvarasya ... varsa-satam abhivardhamana-kosa-danda-sadhana-santana-putra-pautrinah ... Vakatakanam Maharaja-sri-Prthivisenasya". This shows that PrS had continuous supply of treasure which had been accumulating for a hundred years. He was a Saiva. He shifted his Capital to Nandivardhana. His vassal Vyaghradeva, the ruler of Bundelkhand, was conquered by SG.

(vi) The title of Maharaja is not indicative of an inferior status in south. The title 'Samrat' was assumed by Pravarasena simply on account of his performance of Vedic rites.

By the conquest of several small kingdoms in the south, which were already feudatories of the Vakatakas, the kingdom of the Senior Branch of the Vakatakas came to be confined to Northern Vidarbha, between Narmada and the Indhyadri range.

4. PRTHIVISENA I : He ruled from c. 345 to 400 A.D. [(See (v) above)]

5. RUDRASENA II : Son of Prthivisena I. A notable fact is his marriage with Prabhavatigupta d/o CG II of the Imperial Gupta family. She was his Chief queen. CG II is mentioned under his second name Devagupta. In Poona and Riddhapura Cop.-plates of Prabhavatigupta, she has traced her descent from her grand-father, and mentions her father as CG II. The marriage was a diplomatic move. CG II was planning an attack on the Ksatriyas of Ujjayini. The Vakatakas could have been a source of great service or disservice to him in his enterprise. The marriage resulted in the influx of northern influence at the Vakataka court. That some of the Gupta officers were at the Vakataka Court, can be inferred from the Poona Cop.-pl. of Prabhavatigupta which is inscribed in northern variety

of Gupta alphabet, whereas Vakataka records were inscribed in the box-headed variety.

Unlike his father, Rudrasena II was a devotee of Vishnu. This might have been due to the influence of his wife Prabhavatigupta. He died in the prime of his youth. His sons were minor when he died. Prabhavati acted as Regent of her sons. Divakara-sena was the eldest son, but he also died at a very young age before ascending the throne. After his death, the mother acted as Regent of her second son Pravarasena II, who was named Damodarasena in his younger years.

6. Pravarasena II : (c. 420-450) When PS II came of age, he himself took up the reins of administration. About a dozen Copper-plates of his grants have been found, which shows that he was charitably disposed. He enjoyed a long rule of at least 27 years. The copper-plates give no information of any political event during his reign.

Tradition : As he was piously disposed, the tradition about his being given to the pleasures of life, does not seem to be true. The attribution of the Prakrit Kavya 'Setubandha' to him also appears to be improbable, for it is very unusual for a king to write a Prakrit poem, especially when his court language is Sanskrit. The Copper-plates are issued from different places and the name of Pravaranagara occurs more than once. He was a devotee of Sambhu.

7. Narendrasena : (c. 450-465) Narendrasena succeeded his father PS II. His identification with monarch of 8 years (astabdakah) has been rejected. According to Balaghat insc. he was married to the daughter of the lord of Kuntala. Another significant statement in that insc. is his being : "Kosala-Mekala-Malavadhipati-abhyarcita-sasanah", which is ---

(i) Either exaggerated statement, because in Samudragupta's time, the Guptas held E. Malava and in CG II's time even W. Malava came under Gupta sway. Kosala is E. part of C.P. comprising distts. of Bilaspur, Rampur, etc. Mekala is on the south of Narmada river. SkG had his hold on the westernmost part of India. Or,

(ii) it might imply that Vakatakas were contesting the Gupta over-lordship in northern India and defying their authority. But SkG repulsed Narendrasena, which can be inferred from the fact that Prithivisena, s/o Narendrasena, is said to have recovered the sunken fortune of his family.

8. Prthivisena II : (c. 465-480) He is described as "Nimagna-vamsa-samuddhartr".

Basim Branch (Basim plates and Ajanta Cave Insc.) was founded by Sarvasena, the younger son of Pravarasena I. His kingdom seems to have extended from the south of Indhyadri range up to the banks of the Godavari. He made Vatsagulma (modern Basim) in Akola Distt., his Capital. Harisena : the last known monarch of Basim Line, had a minister Varahadeva, who was a pious and liberal person. He caused the Ajanta Cave XVI to be excavated and decorated with sculptures and picture galleries.

UCCAKALPA DYNASTY
(Feudatories of the Vakatakas)

The names of the kings of this dynasty are known from their Copper-plate grants found from different places in Ajayagarh and Jaso States (previously C.I.Agency). These records do not indicate any name of the place to which these kings belonged, and only mention the place from which the grants were issued as Uccakalpa.

There are three stone inscriptions, 2 from Nachna and 1 from Ganja. In these inscriptions Vyaghradeva describes himself as a feudatory of Vakataka king Prthivisena.

Some scholars have identified this Vyaghradeva with Vyaghradeva of Mahakantara, mentioned in All. Pil. Insc. , on the similarity of name and of the script of 4th-5th cent. But the A.P.I. Vyaghra belongs to Daksinapatha, whereas Nachna and Ganja are situated in Aryavarta. Therefore, Vyaghradeva of Nachna and Ganja may be identified with one described in Copper-plates of Jaso and Ajayagarh, because : (a) the script of both the records is the same, and (b) the places are situated near each other. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, this identification may be accepted.

The territory of these Uccakalpa kings was contiguous to that of Parivrajakas. Parivrajakas were the feudatories of the Guptas, while the Uccakalpkas were those of the Vakatakas.

ERA : Years mentioned in the grants of Uccakalpas are called simply Samvat. It is difficult to decide as to which Era they should be referred. While the Parivrajakas used the Era of their over-lords, the Guptas, the overlords of the Uccakalpas, i.e., the Vakatakas, had no Era of their own. They reckoned their dates simply in their regnal years. So the question of Uccakalpas using the Era of their overlords does not arise. Their dates are not even in their own Regnal Years, is evident from the fact that these dates are in serial order throughout from the first to the last monarch. They range from 171 to 214.

A stone insc. found at Bhumra, which is a boundary stone record, tells us that Parivrajaka king Hastin and Uccakalpa king Sarvanatha were contemporary kings. The date on the record is given in astronomical method, viz., '12-year Cycle of Jupiter, which was 'Mahamagha samvatsara'

For Hastin we have dates ranging from 156 to 191 GE (475-510 A.D.). In other words, the reign of Sarvanatha must fall between these years. We have to find out the Mahamagha Samvatsara between 475 and 510. We get three such samvatsaras, viz., GE 165 (A.D. 484), GE 177 (496) and GE 189 (508). Available inscriptions give dates for Sarvanatha ranging from 193 to 214. Now, there are different suggestions about their reference : (a) Dr. Jayaswal suggested that these dates should be referred to Vakataka Era, but we find that there was no such Era.

(b) The second suggestion is to refer them to Kalacuri (Cedi) Era, whose epoch is 248-249 A.D. But according to this we get 193 + 248 = 441 to 214 + 248 = 462 A.D. as dates for Sarvanatha, while the earliest date for Hastin is A.D. 475. We cannot extend Hastin's reign, which is already long, by starting it 13 years earlier.

(c) These dates may be referred to Gupta Era. This would put Sarvanatha from 193 + 319 = 512 to 214 + 319 = 533 A.D. We can start the reign of Sarvanatha four years earlier without much difficulty. i.e. in A.D. 508, the date which fulfils both the conditions, i. e., it is Mahamagha samvatsara and it falls within the reign of Hastin.

There is a long gap between the last known date of Jayanatha, the predecessor of Sarvanatha, i.e., 177, and the earliest known date of Sarvanatha i.e. 193. Therefore, we can very easily assume that the reign of Sarvanatha started 4 years earlier, because :

(i) the relations between the Guptas and the Vakatakas were cordial.

(ii) Vakatakas had no Era of their own.

(iii) In N. India Gupta Era was in use.

So the Uccakalpas used the GE according to the current practice of N.I. They do not mention the sovereignty of the Guptas, because they owed their allegiance to the Vakatakas.

ASOKA

EARLY LIFE : Many stories are found in Buddhist works representing him Kalasoka before and Dharmasoka after his conversion to Buddhism. They are, however, not trustworthy, and only his epigraphic records are of undoubted veracity. They are inscribed either on rocks, or stone pillars or in caves.

I. Rock Inscriptions are of 2 kinds :

(a) 14 Rock Edicts are fourteen different inscriptions found in different localities, all on the confines of India. They follow a serial order.

(b) Minor Rock Edicts, consisting of two different records. Three copies of both in Mysore, and only Edict I at four other places.

II. Pillar Inscriptions :

(i) Seven Pillar Edicts constituting a group.

(ii) Minor Pillar Edicts are four different epigraphs.

III. Cave Inscriptions :

They are engraved in caves in the Barabar Hills of Bihar, and altogether no less than 30 different inscs.

SCRIPT : They are engraved in Brahmi lipi, of which the mystery was first unravelled by James Prinsep in the last century. He read the name 'Piyadasi' but could not identify him.

NAME & TITLE : In epigraphs the king calls himself 'Piyadasi' (Priyadarsin). Turnour of Ceylon Civil Service, a Pali scholar, identified him with Asoka on the authority of Simhalese 'Dipavamsa' which gave Piyadassi or Piyadassana as another name of Asoka, the grandson of Candragupta Maurya. This was later confirmed by the 6th copy of Minor Rock Edict at Maski in Raichur Distt. in Hydrabad Deccan, where the name of Asoka is clearly mentioned in the first line. One of the Ceylonese chronicles styles his grandfather CG as Piyadassana. Therefore, Piyadassi was the king's 'biruda' or second name, and Asoka his real name.

In most of his inscriptions Asoka styles himself as 'Devanam-piyo Piyadasi raja', but sometimes as 'Devanam-piyo Piyadasi', 'Piyadasi raja', ' Devanam-piyo raja', or merely 'Devanam-piyo'. This shows that the word 'Devanam priya' had not acquired a derogatory sense of 'afool' in the time of Asoka, as it had in Bhattoji Diksita's or Hemacandra's time. Another noteworthy fact is that Asoka designates himself as merely 'raja' This shows that the grandiloquent titles of supremacy like 'Maharaja', 'Rajadhiraja' or 'Maharajadhiraja' had not come into use in his time.

PROTOCOLE : Many of Asoka's inscs. commence with the formula 'Devanam piye Piyadasi raja hevam aha' -- thus saith king Priyadarsin, beloved of

the gods. With this compare the proclamation of the Achaemenides, from Darius to Artaxerxes Ochus "Thus saith the king Darius". In both cases the phrase is in the third person. It could not have been imitated by Asoka directly from Persia. As a matter of fact it was one of the protocols of the royal chancery noticed by Kautilya in his Arthasastra. Indians may have adopted the Persian protocol due to the Achaemenian conquest and administration of north-west India.

DATES : In epigraphic records the years are counted from the time of Asoka's coronation. Simhalese tradition says that he was coronated 4 years after his accession to the throne by massacring 99 of his brothers after his father's death, and spering only Tisya, the youngest. This is refuted by his inscriptions which speak, not of one, but of several brothers, living and staying in Pataliputra and various other towns of his empire. There is no good reason to think that any long interval of 4 years elapsed between Asoka's coronation and his assumption of the reins of government.

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION : From Pillar Edict V it is inferable that Asoka was in the habit of celebrating the anniversary of his coronation by release of prisoners :"Yava saduvisati-vasa abhisitena me etaye antalikaye pamna-visati bandhana-mokhani katani..." (Yavat sadvimsati-varsabhisiktena maya etasmin antare panca-vimsatih bandhana-moksah krtah) -- 'By me, who am consecrated 26 years up till now, 25 jail deliveries have been effected just in that period'. The dates specified in the records are in current regnal years.

NAKSATRAS : Kautilya prohibits castration and destruction of animal foetus on certain days, including the days of the Naksatras of the king and the country. Pillar Edict V prohibits castration and branding of animals on Tisya and Punarvasu days. The two separate Edicts of Dhauli and Jaugada (in newly conquered Kalinga) were ordered to be recited every Tisya-day for the exhortation and guidance of the officials against excesses. Moreover the later constellation Tisya is placed prior to eralier Punarvasu in Pillar Edict V. It shows importance and that it must be of the king, and Punarvasu of the country, which should, therefore, be understood as Magadha.

FAMILY : Asoka had several brothers and sisters, living till the 13th year of his reign, and staying not only at Pataliputra, but also in the mufassil towns. He had two queens, one Chief and the Second named Karuvaki from whom he had a son named Tivara. In Pillar Edict VII, Asoka speaks of his 'avarodhana' (harem) of which the inmates were not only his queens but also his left-handed wives, the purdah ladies of lower status, living not only at his capital but also in the provinces. (Cf. Simhalese tradition : during his father's time when he was the Viceroy at Ujjayini, he formed connections with a lady of the Setthi caste who resided at Vidisagiri, modern Besnagar near Bhilsa. In the same Edict he speaks of his own sons, and of Devi-kumaras, most probably sons of his father's queens, i.e. his own non-co-uterine brothers. In epigraphic records at least 4 sons of his are mentioned as in

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charge of 4 viceroyalties of Taksasila, Ujjayini, Suvarnagiri, and Tosali. One cannot say whether Tivara was one of them.

PUBLIC BUSINESS : Rock Edict VI describes how often and at what different places he dispatched the business of his people. At all hours and at all places --- while eating, in closed female apartments, in inner chamber (garbha-grha), with the stud, on horse-back (vinita), or in pleasure orchards. Evidently, therefore, when Asoka had no business to dispose of, he was to be found at his Capital, either regaling in dining hall, engaged with the ladies of his harem, chatting in his retiring room, or inspecting the royal stud (vraja), enjoying horse-ride, or beguiling his time in the orchard.

TASTES : Before conversion Asoka was very fond of meet. Thousands of animals were killed in kitchen. After conversion, even when he rigorously stopped slaughter, he had 2 pea-cocks and one dear for his table. He stopped the killing of the deer but continued to take the flesh of peacocks for some time more. Buddhaghosa, in his commentary on Samyutta-nikaya, says 'To the people of the frontier provinces gandu-ppadas are delicious, but they are abominal to those of the Middle Country. To the latter the flesh of pea-fowl is delicious.' Asoka, being a native of Middle Country was fond of pea-cock flesh and could not give it up at once.

DIVERSIONS & AMUSEMENTS : Rock Edict VIII says that past kings were in the habit of going out on Vihara-yatras or pleasure tours where they enjoyed chase, etc., but Asoka replaced them by Dhamma-yatras, or tours for Dhamma since the 10th year of his reign when he visited Sambodhi, the place where Buddha obtained enlightenment. Before that he also indulged in pleasure excursions, pre-eminently in hunting. But sanctity of animal life which made an indelible impression on his mind after the Kalinga war, made his soul recoil from hunting.

Public entertainments : Ancient kings of India were in the habit of holding Samajas in which the subjects were entertained and feted. It was probably a diplomatic move to keep the people pleased and satisfied. The Samaja was of two kinds ; (a) in which people were treated to dainty dishes in which meat played the most important part (Cf. Rantideva in Mbh. killing 2000 cattle and 2000 kine to fete his people --- in Vanaparvan). It was a convivial melee.

(b) In which people were treated to dancing, music, and other performances. It was synonymous woth Ranga or Preksa-grha or preksagara (amphitheatre) (Cf. Hathigumpha insc. and Nasik Cave insc.)

HORRORS OF WAR : Conquest of Kalinga, the tract of land on the coast of Bay of Bengal between Vaitarani and Languliya rivers, resulted in 1,50,000 captive slaves, 1,00,000 killed and many more died. The remembrance of these appalling figures after his conversion struck Asoka with extreme and genuine remorse. The language is instinct with personal

feeling and the rocks still echo across the ages the wail of a penitent soul. He chastised his officers for excesses on the conquered people and took steps to prevent them in future.

WHY KALINGA WAS CONQUERED ? Rock Edict XIII tells us that Andhra, the country comprising the Kitsna and Godavari Districts, and Parinda, perhaps somewhere on the eastern outskirts of the Mauryan Empire, possibly in Bengal, --- were included in his empire. Kalinga was thus a sort of wedge driven into the body politic and might at any time conspire with the foreign Choda kingdoms of the south.

A year after his conquest of Kalinga he became a Buddhist and the idea of becoming a Cakravarti Dharmika Dharmaraja haunted his mind, i.e. a ruler of the earth, not through conquest, but through righteousness.

ASOKA'S
FOURTEEN ROCK EDICTS
(GIRNAR VERSION)

I

This Dhammalipi has been caused to be written by king Priyadasi, beloved of the gods. No living being here should be killed and offered as a sacrifice ; nor should any Samaja be held ; for king Priyadasi sees much evil (harm),in a Samaja. There are, however, certain Samajas which are considered good by Priyadasi, beloved of the gods.

Formerly in the kitchen of the king Priyadasi, beloved of the gods, many hundreds and thousands of animals were slaughtered everyday for curry. That today when this script on morality has been written only three lives are killed, two peacocks and one deer ; even that deer not regularly. Even these three lives shall not be killed afterwards.

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In Hathigumpha Insc. we are told that Kharavela, the ruler of Kalinga, amused his Capital town by celebrating 'utsavas' and 'samajas'. Previously the same thing was done by Gautamiputra Satakarni, and we know it from the Nasik Cave Insc. The Samaja was obviously a convivial melee and was designed to feast the eye, ear or the palate.

DEVANAM PRIYAH : One of the appellation of Asoka, commonly met with in the inscs., is 'Devanam priyah.' In later times the word came to mean a fool or a dunce, as Bhattoji Diksita in his Siddhanta Kaumudi says : 'devanam priya iti ca murkhe.' Hemacandra also corroborates this. But this evidently could not be the sense in the times of Asoka. Patanjali, we know, associates the word w with 'bhavat, dirghayus, and ayusmat' , e.g., "Istijno hi devanam priyo na tu praptijnah. Isyate hy etad rupam iti." This shows that like other honorific terms 'devanam priyah' was also an auspicious mode of address or characterization. As a matter of fact, the Dipavamsa applied it with reference to Tissa , the ruler of Ceylon. In the Nagarjuni Hill Cave Insc. the term is

used to designate a king called Dasaratha. Similarly, an epigraph from Ceylon applies the epithet to Vanka Nasika Tissa, Gaja-bahuka-gamini, and Mahallaka Naga.

This honorific title was used in the case of kings only, as can be inferred from Rock Edict VIII, where in place of 'Devanam priya' of some versions, 'rajano' of other versions is employed. The term 'devanam priya' was probably used to indicate the belief that the kings were under the protection of the gods. It can best be rendered by the expressions : 'dear unto gods, or, beloved of the gods.'

PRIYA-DARSIN : Except twice or thrice, the general name by which king Asoka is referred to in the inscs. is 'Priya-darsin.' The word means 'one of amiable look, or, one of gracious mien.' The fact that his grandfather Candragupta Maurya was also styled 'Piya-dassana' in Ceylonese chronicles, shows that this was not the proper name of the king. The Ceylonese chronicles call Asoka 'Priya-dasi' and 'Piya-dassana,' but the Indian epigraphs of the monarch describe him only as 'Piya-dasi.' This implies, therefore, that Asoka's grandfather also must have been called 'Piya-dasi' and not 'Piya-dassana.' From this it is clear that 'Piya-dasi' was only a 'biruda' of Asoka. That the proper name of the emperor was Asoka, is demonstrated by the sixth copy of the Minor Rock Edict I discovered at Maski in Sholapur district and another recently discovered in a place near Jhansi. These inscriptions mention the name of the king explicitly in the very first line.

The only answer to the objection that why the king was more often referred to by his 'biruda' than his proper name, is that instances are not wanting where kings are known almost invariably by their epithets. Thus, the son of Govinda III of the Rastrakuta family of Manyakheta is known to us from all his documents by his epithet Amoghavarsa.

COMMENTS

Raja : Even though Asoka was an Emperor, he calls himself only 'raja.' This shows that grandiloquent titles like 'maharaj-adhiraja, or only Maharaja' employed singly or conjointly with

other epithets had not come into use in Asoka's time.

Slaughter of animals : In the inscription Asoka admits that formerly hundreds and thousands of animals were killed in his kitchen: "Pura mahanasamhi devanam-priyasa priya-dasino rano anudivasam bahuni prana-sata-sahasrani arabhisu supathaya. Asoka here refers to a custom which he followed before his conversion to Buddhism. Thousands of cattle were slain in the kitchen and their cooked meat was doled out to the poor. This at once reminds us of Rantideva, a king mentioned in the Mahabharata, during whose reign so great was the number of cattle slaughtered in sacrifices and in his kitchen that a river of blood is supposed to have issued from their hides, which was afterwards called Carmanvati. The meat was served to the poor and it is said in the epic that by doing this he earned untold merit and fame.

When the conscience of Asoka was roused to this wanton cruelty by Buddhism, he put a stop to the carnage, and at the time when this edict was engraved on the rock only three animals were allowed to be killed for food. These, too, he promised to spare in future.

GENERAL

ASOKA'S DHAMMA

The word 'dhamma' being frequently used in his lithic records by Asoka, it is necessary to discover its true import. The word is the Prakrit or Pali form of Sanskrit 'dharma.' Time and again Asoka has exhorted his people to follow Dhamma. Not only did he preach others to practise Dhamma, he himself set an example to them. Rock Edict bears an eloquent testimony to Asoka's zeal for Dhamma. Says he, "aho bheri-ghoso dhamma-ghoso" and "dhamma-vadhiya vadheya vadhisati ceva Devanam-priyo priya-dasi raja."

Now the question arises what is Dhamma of which Asoka was so enamoured. Asoka himself puts the qestion and provides an answer to it in the 2nd Pillar Edict : "Kiyam cu dhamme ti ? Apasinave bahukayane daya dane sace socaye," What is Dharma ? It is freedom from depravity or sin, much good to others, mercy, munificence, truthfulness and purity. Asoka does not stop here but goes on to describe the duties by which the aforesaid virtues are to be translated into practice. They are - non-slaughter of animate beings (anarambho prananam), non-injury to existing creatures (avihimsa bhutanam), service of parents (matari pitari ca susrusa), service of elders (thaira-susrusa), reverence to teachers (gurunam apaciti), seemly behaviour towards friends, acquaintances and relatives (mita-samstuta-natikanam sampatipati), liberality towards Brahmanas and Sramanas (Bamhana-samananam danam), proper treatment of servants and slaves (dasa-bhatakamhi samya-pratipati), thrift and less tendency for hoarding (apa-vyayata apa-bhamdata ca). This is in brief the message of Asoka, and even though a truism, how lucid and succinct and sincere it appears even today. The same virtues which have been sought to be inculcated by different religions and faiths, make a special appeal here. We can discern as it were the very personality of Asoka and hear his voice through these pillars or rocks, which, though lifeless, contain a living message to the war-torn world. It is the same in all climes and all ages.

There are two facets to Asoka's Dhamma -- positive and negative, as are 'pravrtti' and 'nivrtti' in Brahmanical Dharma. The 'pravrttis' lead a man towards those higher values which have just been enumerated. But the whole or fuller account of Dhamma will not be possible without saying a few words about 'nivrttis' or taboos, or the negative side of Asoka's Dhamma.

The negative side can be summed up in one word - 'asinave.' In Pillar Edict III, it is placed side by side with 'papa' and Asoka specifies there the malevolent affections which lead to it. They are ferocity (candiye), cruelty (nithuliye), wrath (kodhe), arrogance (mane), and jealousy (isya). Thus it will be seen that not only the performance of moral duties enumerated by Asoka is necessary, but also freedom from these passions is essential for the full and adequate fulfilment of Dhamma.

In some of his Edicts Asoka commands his people to peep inwards and carry out self-examination (agaya palikhaya = agrya-yah pariksayah) or paccavekkhana. Like a Prophet he says : "Man seeth the good only (saying unto himself) 'this good deed have I done.' In nowise doth he see his sin and say 'this sin have I committed.' This idea of self-examination is looked upon as Christian in origin, but Asoka had propounded it centuries before Christ appeared on this earth.

Dr. Bhandarkar says : "His (Asoka's) Dhamma may be described as the common property of all religions." The virtues and practices which Asoka tells us to follow are precisely those which all religions specify as worthy of inculcation. Asoka's Dhamma, therefore, is not a religion full of theological niceties. It is a code of moral duties which any righteous man belonging to any sect professes. This is the essence of all religions, and this and this alone Asoka wants should thrive -- 'sara-vadhita vadheya.' So far as the doctrinal portion of a religion goes, there are bound to be diverse opinions. But in moral values conflict or divergence has no place, as the conscience, the sense of right and wrong, cannot vary.

There is no place for bigotry in Asoka's Dhamma. The essence of all religions being the same, the possibility of

mutual conflict is not very great. Moreover, Asoka asks the people who may profess a particular creed, to hearken to others and thus become 'bahu-śruta.' By doing so they will become 'kalyāṇāgama' and cause exaltation of their own faith (atma-pasanda-vadhi) and illumination of Dhamma (Dhamma-dipana).

Toleration seems to be the key-note of Asoka's Dhamma. Though a Buddhist to the core, he does not force the followers of other faiths to toe his line. He is tolerant enough to allow them the freedom of faith and freedom of worship. Like the Preamble of the present Indian Constitution, Asoka declares : 'sava pasanda vaseyu,' every religious sect has a right to live. Moreover, not only should they live together, but also co-operate with each other instead of engaging in fruitless discussions. By co-operation will they be able to force up those points of agreement (rather than of conflict) which may not otherwise be visible.

The summum-and-bonum of Asoka's Dhamma, as he himself points out at several places, is 'svaga' or 'svarga.' By holding out this ideal of 'svarga' Asoka exhorts his people to follow Dhamma. And so far propaganda is concerned, he employs every possible means of propagation of his faith. By showing the 'vimanas, Hastins, and Jyotih-skandhas' he tries to win over people to his side. There is no gainsaying the fact that all his propaganda had its effect and within a remarkably short time Buddhism not only spread in India, but went even beyond her borders.

Not only did Asoka exert for the spiritual welfare of the masses, he worked for their temporal weal also. Says he : "Phalani mulani ca yata yata nasti tata tata harapitani ca ropapitani ca. Pamthesu kupa ca khanapita vracha ca ropapita. Not content with that, he provided free medical aid to men and animals by establishing hospitals for both. He caused medical herbs to be planted wherever they did not exist. All this shows that Asoka was as anxious for the temporal welfare of the people as he was for their moral and spiritual uplift. He ameliorated their condition in this world and armed them for the next.

ASOKA'S ROLE in THE SPREAD OF BUDDHISM

Buddhism which had hitherto been more or less a local sect was transformed into a world religion only through the missionary activities of Asoka, The great Emperor, who in the prime of his youth displayed a rare martial spirit and military genious in conquering and annexing Kalinga to his already vast empire, was destined to be the greatest of pacifists of his time, or of all times. The great massacre of Kalinga, it seems, shook the heart of the king from its very roots, and he at once resolved to relinquish all military conquest. His anguished heart found solace in the teachings of Lord Buddha, and instead of military conquests, he embarked upon a campaign of conquest by Dhamma (Dharma-vijaya). Asoka, as he himself tells us, entered the Buddhist fold in his 9th regnal year. For a year he remained lukewarm, but then suddenly he was metamorphosed into a staunch devotee of Buddhism and began to undertake religious tours to Sambodhi and arrange religious instruction (Dhamma-savanani, Dhammanusathini). He set before himself the ideal of becoming (not a combative but) Dharmaraja Dharmika Cakravartin. This ideal always goaded him on to do all he could to propagate the simple religion of Sakya-muni. With the vast administrative and financial resources of his empire Asoka set out on the conquest of the hearts of people, a conquest perhaps more difficulat than a military conquest. In its results his Dhamma-vijaya was remarkably successful, so much so that in Minor Rock Edict I Asoka says : "Human beings who were not mixed with the gods, were caused to be mixed with them throughout the Jambudvipa. This is the fruit of effort." This shows that within an incredibly short period of one year after Asoka's entry into the Samgha he succeeded in elevating the moral standard of the masses to such a high level that they were capable of mixing with the gods or saints. This is an achievement of which anyone can be justly proud.

This phenominal success was achieved through the following measures :-

Firstly, as the Rock Edict IV tells us, Asoka tried to foster and propagate Dhamma by showing to the people the spectacles of Vimanas or celestial palaces, Hastins or divine elephants, and Jyotih-skandhas (lighted columns) or burning columns (agi-khandhani). These represented the kinds of heavenly bliss in store for the good and virtuous in the next birth when they would become gods.

He organized and encouraged Samajas or congregations of men for music, dancing and theatrical performances. These he utilized as excellent means of propaganda for the spread of Dhamma (Dhamma-vadhata). He, however, forbade those Samajas in which meat was served and looked upon them with disfavour (bahukam hi dosam samajamhi pasati Devanam-priyo priya-dasi raja).

He organized Dhamma-yatras in place of time-honoured Vihara-yatras (revelries or sprees). There he distributed money among the Brahmanas, Sramanas and the aged, and visited the provincials whom he gave instructions about Dhamma and made enquiries about Dhamma (janapadasa ca janasa dasanam Dhammanusasti ca Dhamma-paripucha. R.E. VIII).

Pillar Edict VII gives us a lucid account of the measures that the emperor adopted for the spread of Dhamma. For a time he kept pondering over the problem in ordervto evolve a Master Plan which couls show quick results. He had seen failure of the earlier kings in this direction and was, therefore, thoughtful enough to give it serious thought and devise some effective and fool-proof method. No wonder that his deliberations made him hit upon a Master Plan which may be used as an effective propaganda technique even today.

Asoka established Dhamma-stambhas (Dhamma-thambhani kateni), which were not the usual architectural columns, but were pillars of Charity which he forthwith goes on to expàain -- "magesu pi me nigohani lopapitani chayopagani hosanti pasu-munisanam, amba-vadikya lopapita, adha-kosikyani pi me udupanani khanapitani, nimsidhiya ca kalapita." But he does not attach great importance to these public works nor does he take exclusive credit for him-

self for he admits that such good works were done by previous kings also. It appears, therefore, that Asoka's aim was to set a personal example in order to encourage the people to do similar works of public good. In Pillar Edict VII he says : "But I have done this with the intent that men may follow the practices of Dhamma (Imam cu Dhammanupatipati anupatipajantu ti = Imam tu Dharmanupratipattim anupratipadyatam iti).

Another innovation in the field of propaganda for Dhamma was the creation of a class of new officers called 'Mahamatas' who had a twofold temporal and spiritual funtion to perform. In their temporal duties they had to tour through the districts every five years in order to set right any excesses committed by the Pradesikas or Rajukas. They could also temper justice with mercy by allowing the teen-aged and the aged persons to be set free, or remit the sentences of orphans or afflicted persons. As regards their spiritual function, they were required to preach Dhamma as well as to keep contact with all sects, e.g. the Buddhists, the Ajivikas, Nirgranthas, etc. They were to focus the people's attention on the essentials (of religion) rather than non-essentials and thus put an end to all acrmony and bitterness. They were also required to encourage the house-holders to contribute something towards charity, and also to satisfy their hankering after truth. 'Sava pasanda vaseyu' was Asoka's ideal and the Dhamma-Mahamatas were commissioned to achieve that ideal.

The third means are the Dhamma-savanani and Dhammanusathini, which are the two aspects of the one and the same thing. In Pillar Edict VII Asoka tells us the practices and virtues that constitute Dhamma as he does in Pillar Edict II and Rock Edicts. As propaganda was necessary for the inculcation of these virtues, he ordered his Purusas and the Rajukas to preach to the people (Pulisa pi bahune janase ayata ..... Lajuka pi bahukesu prata-sata-sahesu ayata te pi me anapita hevam hevam ca paliyovada tha janam Dhamma-yutam ...).

Rock Edict III also says that in the 12th year of his reign he commanded not only the Rajukas but also the Pradesikas and the Yuktas to go on circuit every 5 years to deliver instructions

in Dhamma in addition to the discharging of their official duties (Sarvata vijitasi mama yuta ca Rajuke ca Pradesike ca pancasu pancasu vasesu anusamyanam niyatu eta yeva athaya imaya Dhammanusastiye ....).

Thus, it will be seen that one of the most effective means employed by Asoka for the dissemination of Dhamma was the employment of higher order of his officials for preaching work. Just as his Yutas and Rajukas preached Dhamma inside the country, so did his ambassadors in foreign lands. In Rock Edict XIII, Asoka mentions his missionary activity in the kingdom of five Greek kings, Antiochus, Magas,

But this was not all. For in the same Edict the king tells us that where the envoys of the Beloved of Gods do not go, there the people having heard the utterances of Dhamma, the ordinances and teachings of Dhamma by the Gods' Beloved, practise Dhamma and will so practise. This, as Bhandarkar thinks, is a reference to his missionary activity in Burma and China.

From this it is evident that the missionary activities of Asoka were not confined to this country alone, but extended into the outside world also. As he was not moved by any narrow or parochial considerations, his Dhamma was meant for the whole of mankind. Even the dumb animal creation of God figured prominenly in his plans of betterment of this and the next life. In Rock Edict VI he says : "Nasti hi me toso ustanamhi athasamtiranaya va. Katavamate hi me sava-loka-hitam." Or, there is no higher duty than the welfare of the whole world. I am never satisfied with my exertions or despatch of business. These sentiments make Asoka one of the greatest humanitarians of his time as well as a great internationalist. He was not actuated in his endeavours by a desire for fame, for he says in Rock Edict X, "Devanam priyo priyadasi raja yaso va kiti va no mahathavaha mamnate." It was the idea of absolving himself from the debt of the living beings that impelled him on this difficult path of Dhamma. "Bhutanam anamnam gaccheyam ..." (R.E. VI).

RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS IN ASOKA'S TIMES

From the repeated mention of the word Pasanda in the Rock Edicts and his statements "Sava pasanda vaseyu ; sava pasanda me pujita," there remains little doubt that there existed several religious systems in the times of Asoka. Among these specific mention is made of Samgha, Nirgantha or Jaina and Babhana or the Brahmanical religion. By Samkha, evidently, Asoka meant Samgha, the Buddhist Fraternity. Besides these, other minor religions also flourished, among which Ajivikas may be specially mentioned.

The inscriptions of Asoka throw an interesting light on the Buddhism of that day. In Rock Edict XIII there is a post script: "sarva-sveto hasti sarva-loka-sukhaharo nama." Various scholars have exercised their ingenuity in finding out the true significance of the words 'sveto' or 'hasti'. They have arrived at the conclusion that the expression 'sarva-sveto hasti' refers to Buddha. There is representation of an elephant at Dhauli and Kalsi, and on the top of the rock is written 'Gajatame.' Now, according to a Buddhist legend, Bodhisattva, the future Buddha, left the Tusita heaven to bring happiness to the people in the form of an elephant. This gives us a clue that 'Hasti' or 'Gajatama' is nothing else but Buddha. From this it may be observed that though there were no icons of Buddha, he was represented at least by the elephant symbol in Asoka's time. This earlier symbolism might have later on led to the deification of Buddha and to the making of his images.

Though Asoka was a Buddhist devotee and undertook tours to the sacred places of Buddhism like Sambodhi, he did not concern himself much with the doctrinal portion of Buddhism. He deeply imbibed its moral principles and applied them to the moral rearmament of his people. These he considered to be the essence of true religion and devoted all his energy to their promotion and growth: "sara-vadhita vadheya." Toleration seems to be the keynote of Asoka's religious policy. In Rock Edict XII, he advises his people not to indulge in mutual recrimination and the glorification of their own sect. Instead, he enjoins them

to listen to others and thus promote the growth of their own sect, for otherwise they would only harm their own sect: "Atpa-pasanda-puja va para-pasanda-garaha va no bhave apakaranamhi lahuka va asatamhi tamhi prakarane. Pujetaya tu eva para-pasanda. Evam karum atpa-pasandam ca vadhayati para-pasandasa ca upa-karoti. Tad-amnatha karoto atpa-pasandam ca chanati para-pasam-dam ca pi apakaroti." That is why Asoka advises his people to live in concord : "Ta samavayo eva sadhu."

The Edicts also enlighen us about the prevalent superstitions of that time. Rock Edict IX tells us that people perform many kinds of 'mangalas' or religious rites on several occasions like the birth of a son, marriage, going to a foreign land, etc. : "Asti jano ucavacam mamgalam karote ..." Especially the women performed many and useless types of religious rites : "Eta tu mahidayo bahu nirathakam mamgalam karote." This is just as it is today. Asoka advised people not to indulge in these futile rites but practise Dhamma-mamgala, because this alone was 'maha-phala.'

THE SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN THE TIME OF ASOKA

Wherever Asoka recommends good practice to be followed for the realisation of Dhamma, he uses the expression : 'Dasa-bhatakamhi sampratipati.' Now, the word bhataka means an ordinary servant in contrast to the word 'dasa' or a slave. The use of the expression 'dasa' seems to indicate the existence of the practice of slavery. The occurence of this word in lithic records is enough to disprove the much flaunted statement of Megasthenese that slavery was absent in India in the time of Asoka. That slavery continued to exist even after Asoka can be gathered from a reference in Mrcchakatika where Vasantasena bought the freedom of Madanika by paying a large amount as ransom. It may be that 'dasa' referred to a certain type of menial servants but it would be the perversity of truth to say that slavery existed in the form in which it existed the West where the slaves were more brutally treated than animals.

Asokan inscriptions throw some light on the condition of women also, particularly on the women of the royal household. Asoka had given orders to his officials and servants to report to him people's business even if he be taking food, or in closed apartments, or in the inner chamber (orodhanamhi gabhagarammhi). The word for royal harem is 'orodhana.' This, therefore, is a clear proof of the fact that the women of the royal household were kept in seclusion, which at once reminds us of the expression 'asuryampasya raja-darah' cited in the Kasika-vrtti. The prevailing view that Purdah system was first introduced into India by Mohammedan conquerors is thus fully refuted. The deduction from the edicts is further confirmed by references to 'avagunthana' and 'yavanika' in the dramas of Bhasa and Kalidasa, Kamasutra of Vatsyayana, and above all the Arthasastra of Kautilya, the Chief Minister of Asoka's grandfather.

One more point on which the inscription shed a welcome light is the percentage of literacy in India. Asoka has said repeatedly that his documents were published so that people may learn the principals of Dhamma and translate them into

practice. This hope on the part of Asoka implies that masses in his time were literate, that they could at least read. The Pillars, etc. are erected at those places which were either on the highways or outside the big towns or cities. They were intended for the travelling public to read and be inspired by the instructions given on them. This is a solid proof of the high percentage of literacy among the masses. Had the Pillars or edicts been established in cities and towns, such an inference could not be conclusive, for literacy is bound to be higher in centres of learning and civilisation.

As for the language, Magadhi is used throughout the Ganga-plain. While we may not deny that the spoken language of that time was some form of Prakrit, we must not overlook the fact that the Prakrit was not divided from Sanskrit by a very big gap. As a matter of fact, there are several instances in which there seems to be very little difference between the two languages, e.g. "Asti jano ucavacam mamgalm karote.' The passage has only a slight phonetical change from its Sanskrit equivalent. Although the language used for administrative purposes of the State was Magadhi, this did not preclude the use and popularity of Sanskrit, for there was no wide gulf between the Classical Sanskrit and Prakrit at that time.

Now, a word about caste system. The inscriptions mention three classes of people -- Babhana, Bhata, and Ibhya (R.E. 5). This shows that there existed only three castes -- Brahmanas, ksatriyas and Vaisyas. But all this is controversial. We can interpret the terms differently also. This, therefore, remains an open question for the present.

ASOKA'S EMPIRE & ADMINISTRATION

We do not possess any detailed account of the administrative machinery in times of Asoka. The inscriptions do not take us very far, because they are records of morality (Dhamma-lipis) and as such are not expected to yield any detailed information regarding the administrative set up of the country in those times. From casual remarks, however, and from the technical terms used incidentally, we can piece together bits of information, which howsoever imperfect, is indispensable for a student of political history.

Asoka designates his empire, which is under his direct administration, as 'vijita' (sarvata vijitamhi mama yuta ca Rajuke ca kata'. R.E.). Besides the vijita territories, there were other feudatory states like Andhra, Parinda, Bhoja and Kamboja which acknowledged the suzerainty of Asoka. They seem to have depended on the imperial army for defence.

The emperor was at the head of the government, and all authority, administrative as well as legislative, vested in him. He had for his guidance and advice a Council of Ministers known as Pastisa or Parisad. This consisted of all the important Ministers, but their number cannot be ascertained. The Parisad is mentioned in the 6th Rock Edict in connection with quick information that the emperor desires to obtain about the difference of opinion in the 'Parisa' (Parisayam pativeditavyam sarvata sarve kāle). The Parisad has been an integral part of the Indian administrative apparatus since very early times, being mentioned in the Vedic literature. According to Dr. D.R.Bhandarkar, the Parisad was to interpret the orders of the king and was responsible for their successful execution if it agreed on their utility. If there was a difference of opinion or unanimous opposition among the members against a particular royal injunction, the matter was referred to the king who felt compelled to make the necessary adjustments or cancel it if warranted. This leads us to the conclusion that though the king had delegated certain powers to the Parisad, he continued to remain the final authority, i.e., the fountaun-head whence all authority sprang.

The Parisad consisted of Mahamatras. From this we infer that all or most of the important heads of the Departments entrusted with various administrative responsibilities. That was the arrangement at the Centre. The provinces must also have had more or less a similar arrangement.

We have got various sets of inscriptions which are addressed to the Ministers of different places. A Minor Pillar Edict is addressed to the Mahamatras of Kausambi. There are references to the Mahamatras in Siddhapur version of the rock edicts. In this way Ministers in different parts of India are addressed. From this it is easy to infer that the inscriptions were mostly engraved at the provincial head-quarters and the orders therein were meant for the officers of those provinces to carry out.

Each administrative unit had its Chief Officer, most probably called the Pradesika, and was in charge of a province. Under him were the Rajukas, officers as the Edict says, appointed over hundreds and thousands of beings: "Rajuka pi me bahusu pana-sata-sahasresu ayata." They appear to have been officers in charge of districts or Divisions within the provinces. There were other classes of officers also such as the Yuktas and Purusas whose functions cannot be determined. As the records were meant only for the propagation of Dhamma, not much of political reference could be expected.

SEVEN PILLAR EDICTS

(DELHI TOPRA VERSION)

I

Thus saith king Piyadasi, beloved of the gods. Having been anointed for 26 years this script on morality was caused to be written by me. This world and the next are difficult to attain except by foremost longing for Dhamma, foremost examination, foremost service, foremost fear, and foremost effort. But through my instruction the regard & fervour for Dhamma has increased & will increase day by day. And my officers, whether of high, middle or lower rank, will conform to it and accomplish it. They are quite competent to reclaim the fickle (And they are quite able to urge others /to do it/ --- 'alam ca palam=param'-- Dr. Bhandarkar). So also the ministers of the frontiers. This indeed is the method (or precept -- Bhandarkar) that this (namely,) protection by Dhamma, causing happiness by Dhamma, and guarding by Dhamma.

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COMMENTS

Dhamma-vijaya : Ever since Asoka became Buddhist, his mind yearned to achieve a conquest by Dhamma, and, as Dr. Bhandarkar points out (in "Asoka"), he was anxious to win the title of 'Cakravarti Dharmika Dharmaraja'. This Dhamma-vijaya of Asoka, as is recently observed by T.N.Ramacandran, was not different from that advocated in the Mahabharata or the Arthasastra. Kautilya distinguishes between three kinds of conquerors -- 'Dharma-vijayin, lobha-vijayin, and asura-vijayin.' According to his definition, the first is satisfied with mere obeisance of the defeated king, the second by what he can safely gain in land and money, and the third with the life of the vanquished. From the description of Kalidasa :"sriyam jahara na tu medinim," it appears that in ancient times Dharma-vijaya was understood to consist in depriving the defeated or weaker king of his glory only and not of his territory. This laudable ideal is well exemplified in Raghu and Samudragupta, and such other kings who practised the ideal of 'grahana-moksa.' In the present edict, Dhamma-vijaya stands for as an antithesis to 'sarasaka'

PILLAR EDICT II

(TRANSLATION)

Beloved of the gods Piyadasi, the king, has said thus -- Dhamma is good. But what does Dhamma consist of ? (It consists of) freedom from depravity (L.J.N. -- little sin), much good, compassion, charity (Bhand. - liberality), truth, purity. And verily I have distributed charities of various kinds (lit. the gift of sight have I given in manyfold ways). To the bipeds and quadrupeds, the winged and the aquatic animals have I done many kinds of benevolent deeds, even up to the boon of life. But other good deeds have also been done by me. For this purpose the script on morality has caused to be written by me, that (people) may adopt it accordingly and that it may long endure. He who will conform to it in the (prescribed) manner will do a good deed.

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COMMENTS

Apasinave bahu kayane : In answer to a self put question 'What is Dhamma ?' Asoka mentions ~~x~~ six principles which constitute Dhamma. The first two of them are 'apasinave' and 'bahu kayane'. Now, 'bahu kayane' means much good. As the two are placed in juxtaposition with each other, the suggestion is irresistible that they are antithetical and as such represent the two sides of Asoka's Law of Piety, the negative and positive. As 'bahu kayane' is positive, so naturally 'apasinave' is negative. It means 'a little demerit, a small fault'(alpa-asnavah). Now the question arises what 'Asinava' is, the negative of which is recommended here ? In Pillar Edict III 'asinava' has been mentioned side by side with 'papa' (sin), or in Edict X we meet with 'apa-parisrave' or 'apa-palisave' in the sense of small demerit. It therefore appears that 'asinava is the same as 'asava', a term frequently occuring in Buddhist Jatakas. But the 'asavas' of Buddhism are not the 'asinavas' of which Asoka speaks here. In the Jaina work A aramga-sutta, a word Anhaya occurs which Jacobi translates as sin. The term cor-

responds to 'asinava' and like that is derived from 'a-_/snu'. As the word 'asinava' (=athahaya) is used in P.E. III side by side with 'papa', it seems that both have different meanings or connotation. 'papa' means sin, Dr. Bhandarkar observes : " We shall not be far from right if we take 'asinava' to signify depravity or defilement."
The 'asnavas' or 'anhaya' of Jainism are in essentials the same as enumerated in their works. Asoka seems to have adopted and assimilated some of the psychological concepts of Jainism.

Some regard 'asinava' to be the Apabhramsa form of 'asrava' Which occurs in Apastamba Dharmasutra (2.2.5.19) and is explained by Haradatta in his commentary as "yaih purusah asravyate bahir akrsyate,' that is to say by which a man is drawn towards the outward pleasures of life. But Dr. Buhler and others do not accept this interpretation, because Sanskrit 'sra' changes to 'ssa' in Pali and Prakrit and not to 'sina'. Therefore the above derivation seems to be the correct one.

'Cakhu-dane pi me bahu-vidhe dinne' : I have made the gifts of the eyes in manyfold ways. The word 'cakhu' (==Caksu) has been often used both in Hindu scripturs in the sense of 'spiritual insight' (paramarthika drsti). Here it means, therefore 'the sight of the doctrine (R.E. - IX and XI). The means adopted towards this end consisted of Dhammanusathini, i.e., imparting of instructions in the laws of piety and morality. Cakhu stands for 'light' (aloka), 'knowledge' (panna-cakhu= light of knowledge).

'Sace socaye' : 'saca' or truthfulness is the moral quality which is defined by Asoka as the courage of speaking the truth : 'sacam vataviyam' (Brahmagiri, M.R.E. - II) and the strength of adhering to faith : 'dadha-bhatita'. 'Socaye' is the mental quality consisting essentially in 'bhava-sudhita', i.e., purity of heart, purity of motive, purity of sentiment and is broad-based on self-restraint (samyama),

PILLAR EDICT III

(TRANSLATION)

Thus saith king Piyadasi, beloved of the gods : (A person) sees the good deed only, (saying unto himself) this good deed has been done by me. In nowise does he see sin (saying unto himself) 'this sin have I committed,' or 'this indeed is a depravity.' But this certainly is difficult to scrutinize. Nevertheless, it should be looked into thus : 'these(passions) indeed lead to depravity, such as violence, cruelty, anger, conceit, envy, and by means of these may I not cause my fall. This should certainly be seen to : 'This is to my good for this world and this again is to my good for the next.

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PILLAR EDICT IV

(TRANSLATION)

Thus saith Priyadasi, beloved of the gods : Having been consecrated for 26 years, this script on morality was caused to be written. The Rajukas have been set by me over people (consisting of) hundreds and thousands of souls. Any reward or punishment by them has been placed by me under their control (L.J.N. -- I have granted independence to them in matters judicial and criminal) in order that the Rajukas may perform their duties with confidence and without fear, cause welfare and happiness to the people of the provinces and confer favours/(be kind) (upon them). They will make themselves acquainted with what gives happiness and pain and will exhort the people of the country in a manner which is in accordance with Dhamma, so that they may propitiate the here and the hereafter. It behoves the Rajukas to serve me (Bhand. - The Rajukas are eager to serve me). Purusas will also act according to my desire) They too will exhort some so that the Rajukas will strive to please me. Just as one feels confident (reassured) after making over one's offspring to a clever (intellident or experienced) nurse (saying unto himself) 'the nurse is clever. The nurse will bring up my children happily. So here Rajukas have been appointed by me for the happiness and welfare of the provincials. In order that they may perform their duties with confidence, without fear (and) without perplexity (L.J.N. - without being attracted), for this reason any reward or punishment by the Rajukas has been placed by me under their sole control (L.J.N. - for this have I made the Rajukas independent in matters, judicial and criminal). This indeed is desirable. For what ? For the sake that there should be uniformity in matters judicial and criminal (Bhand. - Uniformity of administration and uniformity of punishment). Even this is my injunction - to men who are bound by fetters, on whom sentence has been passed and who have been condemned to death, have I granted three days as something rightfully and exclusively

their own. (In the interval) their qualities will propitiate (the Rajukas) in order to grant their life, and to propitiate death they (the convicta) will give alms and observe fasts pertaining to the next world. For my desire is that even when /(in the period of imprisonment) /the time has expired, they may propitiate the next world (in this short time)! and that people's manifold pious acts, self-restraint and allotment for charities may increase.

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COMMENTS

'Nasamtam va nijhapayita': The word 'nijhapayita' signifies 'a persom to plead for.' A Gatha in Ayoghara Jataka speaks of two kinds of 'nijjhapana,' one is that od appealing to the king and convincing him of convict's innocence by calling reliable witnesses, and the other is that of making the heavenly king of Death relent, and propitiate him with religious offerings (bali-kamma-vasena khamapenti pasadenti). Now, a Jataka passage says : 'labhamti te rajino nijjhetum ta maccuno nijjhapanam karomti.' Here the word 'nijjhapana' is used predicatively of 'maccuno' or death. It appears that here also the same idea is intended. Although here we have Rajjukas in place of the king to whom appeal is to be referred for the commutation of the sentence or ant other type of relaxation to save the doomed (jivitaye tanam), the other idea, ~~ix~~ that of pleading, the propitiation of death, is the same. The word 'nasantam' means death, whose disposition (anta=end) is 'nasa' destruction. There will thus be a twofold propitiation according to Asoka : (1) Propitiation of Rajjukas by the relations of the convict by adducing proofs of his innocence and (2) propitiation of Death by the convict himself.

'Yote dinne' : Kern equates 'yote' with Samskrta 'Yautaka.' Dr. Bhandarkar accepts the view and says : "Kern rightly connects 'yote' with Samskrta 'yautaka' , ans 'yate is taken by European ~~x~~ scholars in the sense of respite.

Here an important point to note is that 'yautaka' does not mean - respite, but something exclusively and rightfully belonging to a person. This sense is by no means inapplicable here."

According to Dr. B.M.Barua, the word has no such sense in the early literature. In Sabda-kalpa-druma it is given to mean 'something received by a woman by way of dowry or wedding present and hence forming her exclusive property.' Dr. Barua thinks that 'yote' is equivalent to 'yotre' and 'yotram' of Prakrit and Sanskrit respectively, meaning 'given full scope or rope, i.e. respite of three days.'

'Atapatiye me kate' : Here 'atapatiye' is in apposition to 'abhihale' and 'damde', THE award of reward or punishment, the hearing of cases or judgment, in short, the administration of justice which was the normal duty of the Rajukas. The expression 'atapatiye' means 'a matter of one's own concern.' The consensus of opinion among Asokan scholars is that 'these are metters of the sole concern of the Rajukas, and not of the king as suggested by S.N.Mitra. The analogy by which Asoka makes us understand the new situation is that of a father being relieved of the worry and anxieties after entrusting his child to a clever nurse. Here the father is evidently the king, and subjects the children, and Rajukas the nurse. In the present Edict too, while explaining the analogy Asoka says : 'Hevam mama lajuka kata janapadasa hita-sukhaye,' which shows that the whole charge of the good and happiness of the people was given to the Rajukas. The immediate object of the measure was to enable them to work on their own initiative and responsibility without fear and with self-confidence.

The statement of Asoka 'atapatiye me kate' implies that before this they had not free hand and worked as they did under a constant fear of interference from the king or his deputies. It was Asoka who for the first time removed this sword of Democles off their heads, and made them independent for the proper discharge of the functions of their Departments. To use the modern expression, the judiciary was made, as far as possible, independent of the executive so that justice may be done without any fear or favour. This, indeed, one of the great achievements or reforms of Asoka.

'Viyohala-samata ca damda-samata ca' : Dr. Bhandarkar translates as 'uniformity in administration and uniformity in punishment (damda).' Now, what is uniformity ? This is indeed difficult to answer. But what he probably meant was this : The Rajukas were not the only officers who were connected with the administration of justice. There were two more officers, the Nagara-vyavaharikas and Pradestrs, who performed the functions of a judge. As there were, thus, three classes of officials in one and the same province who performed judicial as well as other duties, uniformity in respect of 'vyavahara' and 'damda' was not possible. The administration of justice could not consequently be expected to be uniform even ~~ix~~ so far as the people of one province were concerned. This was a veritable evil and Asoka tried to remedy it by handing over the Rajukas the sole charge of judicial department and relieving the other classes of official of this work.

PILLAR EDICT V

(TRANSLATION)

King Piyadasi, the beloved of gods, saith thus ; After the 26th year of my coronation I have prohibited the slaughter of these animals (or beings0, viz., parrot, thrush, aluna (aruna), ruddy goose, swan, nandi-mukha, gelata, jatuka(bat), ambakapilika, dudi (a small tortoise), boneless fish, vedaveyaka (jivamjivaka=cakora, pratridge), gamga-puputaka, samkuja-mache (oyster ?), kaphata (tortoise), seyake (porcupine), pamna-sase (parna-sasa, squirrel ?), the srmara deer, sandake (castrated bull ?), oka-pinde, the spotted antelope, white pigeon, domestic pigeon, and all quadrupeds which are neither put to use nor eaten (as food). A goat, sheep or sow which is pregnant or is yielding milk or their young ones (cubs) up to the age of six months are also not to be killed. Cocks should not be slain, husk containing insects should not be burnt, forests should not be burnt to cause havoc or destruction of beasts, and one animal should not be fed on another animal. On the three full-moon days of the three four-monthly divisions (of the year), on the full-moon day of the month Pausa, on the three days of (every) lunar month, viz, the 14th, 15th and the 1st, on Dhruva and fast days fish should not be killed nor sold. In elephant forests and on ferries all other kinds animals also should not be killed on these very days. Bulls should not be branded on the 8th, 14th and 15th days of every lunar fortnight as well as under the Tisya and Punarvasu constellations or on festive days of the four-monthly divisions. Nor should goat, sheep, hog and other animals that are usually branded, be branded. Under the constellation Tisya and Punarvasu, at the beginning of the four-monthly divisions and during the (bright?) fortnights of the four-monthly divisions, the horse and the bull should not be marked (with hot iron). During the period of 26 years since my coronation, I have effected 25 jail deliveries.

COMMENTS

'Etaya amtalikaye pamna-visati bamdha-mokhani katani' : This statement is made with reference to the 26th year of Asoka's coronation (abhiseka). Asoka effected 25 jail deliveries evidently one every year of his reign. The question is, whether the release of prisoners was made on his birthday anniversaries or on the anniversaries of the day of his 'abhiseka.'

'Imani jatani avadhiyani katani' : Some people draw the conclusion that Asoka had altogether stopped the slaughter of animals altogether in sacrifices. But from this edict it becomes clear that he had only restricted the animal slaughter. He only brought under control the unlimited and extravagant killing that was in vogue. Animal killing was prohibited only on 56 days of the year. It is to be noted that among the animals that are prohibited from killing the name of the cow is not mentioned.

'Catummasisu' : From very ancient times in India the year was divided into three parts of four months each, viz., winter comprising the months of Kartika, Margasirsa, Pausa and Magha ; summer comprising Phalguna, Caitra, Vaisakha and Jyestha ; and Rains comprising Asadha, Sravana, Bhadrapada ans Asvin. Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina mendicants used to pass the four months of the rainy season by staying at one place. According to one calculation the full-moon day of Caturmasya falls at the end of the four months, and according to the other, it falls on the first day of every Caturmasya. Patanjali has explained 'caturmasi' as ' catursu masesu bhava caturmasi paurnamasi' that is to say the 'purnima' which falls at the end of the four months. Kasika-vrtti also follows Patanjali and considers 'caturmasi' to signify the 'purnimas' falling in the months of Asadha, Kartika and Phalguna. According to this view every caturmasya end with a purnima.

PILLAR EDICT VI

Thus says king Piyadasi, Beloved of the gods: since I was consecrated twelve years I have caused Dhamma-lipi to be written for the welfare and happiness of the people. Avoiding this and that (without violation of this and that -- Bhandarkar) they may attain to this and that growth of Dhamma (perceiving): thus lies the happiness and welfare of the people. I scrutinize whether as among (my) relatives so among those far and near -- what ? -- whether I bring happiness to them and I act accordingly. And similarly I examine among all sects, (congregations -- Bhandarkar). And sects I have honoured with various honours. And that which is examination by self which is considered foremost by me. / The voluntary advances (to a sect) are considered by me as the chief thing./ This Dhamma-lipi has been caused to be written by me when crowned twenty-six years.